

# ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES OVER OUTCOMES

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A review of innovative approaches to  
meeting the LGA 2002 challenge of  
identifying community outcomes

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## Contents

Acknowledgements .....	4
Introduction .....	3
Overview .....	5
The Waitakere Way.....	8
Tomorrow's Manukau.....	14
Tauranga Tomorrow.....	18
Future Taranaki.....	22
Wanganui's Future .....	27
Choosing Futures .....	31
Future Path Canterbury.....	35
Place-based Community Plans .....	40
Our Way Southland .....	46
References.....	50

## Introduction

The community outcomes process is of critical importance if district and regional councils are to fulfil one of the prime requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 - "to enable democratic local decision-making, and action by, and on behalf of, local communities.

This paper describes some innovative examples of Local Government engagement processes. It has a specific focus on the identification of community outcomes, as required under the LGA 2002. It documents processes that have been designed particularly for the purpose of identifying outcomes and processes that are evolving from or building upon strategic planning exercises.

These examples focus on the development of strategic relationships at a national, regional and local level, and on the engagement with individuals and groups. The range of examples presented does not represent the totality of processes Local Government is currently involved in, but does, however, provide a selection of experiences from around New Zealand.

The examples were selected from a brief nation-wide scoping exercise and include processes involving three district, three city councils and three regional groupings, which have developed in collaboration between local authorities in a particular region

Interviews were carried out with key people who are currently, or have previously, been employed by councils to implement particular processes

As is often the case, the questions these examples raise are almost as numerous as the answers they provide. The following overview highlights a number of key themes arising from the examples, which all present the opportunity for further exploration, discussion and debate.

*Local Government New Zealand* is committed to providing relevant and accurate information and resources to help our members meet their statutory obligations. This research paper was commissioned so that early lessons about identifying community outcomes might be shared and sector understanding increased. *Local Government New Zealand* looks forward to being a part of an ongoing discussion and continuing to encourage good practise across the local government sector.

Finally, I would like to thank Kym Burke for preparing this research paper, which I am sure will make an important contribution to enhancing sector performance.

Eugene Bowen  
Chief Executive  
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## Overview

*Local Government New Zealand* recognises local authorities, national agencies and the community sector are exploring new ways of working together. In some cases these relationships have been developing over a number of years. Other relationships are being established directly as a result of changes to the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA2002).

The purpose of the LGA2002 is to, “*provide for democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities*”.<sup>1</sup> A requirement of the Act is that local authorities identify “*community outcomes*”. One purpose of the identification of outcomes is to, “*provide opportunities for communities to discuss their desired outcomes in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community*”.<sup>2</sup> The process for identifying outcomes has been left to the discretion of councils. However, local authorities are required to identify other bodies capable of influencing community outcomes. If possible, councils should secure their agreement to the process. Councils are also required to ensure the process encourages public participation.<sup>3</sup>

Once community outcomes have been identified these must be documented within the council’s Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). The LTCCP must describe how the council intends to contribute to advancing the community outcomes. The identification of community outcomes must be carried out not less than once every six years and the preparation of an LTCCP not less than once every three years.<sup>4</sup> Councils must also monitor and report on the progress made by their communities in achieving outcomes.

Over and above the regulatory aspects of the changes the LGA2002 has created a renewed context for councils. This context is broader, deeper, and opens the way for innovation. The LGA2002 envisages that community outcomes will stretch beyond traditional approaches to council business and encompass the wider social, environmental, economic and cultural context. This provides local authorities with the opportunity to exemplify profound leadership through meaningful collaboration and engagement with their communities.

As local authorities, government agencies, Maori and the community sector work collaboratively, processes begin to evolve in response to the intersection of context and needs. Sharing experiences and identifying issues for further exploration will assist in establishing or further developing local, regional and national relationships and processes. This exercise identified a number of key issues which may assist in directing further discussion and debate.

A significant issue for councils is the structure upon which community outcome processes are identified, facilitated and implemented. Local authorities are currently engaged in a variety of regional and district or city structures. There are differing levels of participation from the government sector and national institutions. Councils are exploring the desirability and achievability of these differing levels of collaboration and engagement. While there are strategic advantages in regional structures, how does this impact on local

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<sup>1</sup> Local Government Act 2002: Part 1, Clause 3

<sup>2</sup> Local Government Act 2002: Part 6, Clause 91 (2)(a))

<sup>3</sup> Local Government Act 2002: Part 6, Clause 91 (3)

<sup>4</sup> Local Government Act 2002: Part 6, Clause 93,

agendas? Some councils have expressed the need for “*local solutions to local issues*”. Equally, local outcomes may be clearly identified, but how practical will these be to achieve without integration and balance at a regional level? How will national initiatives link to local or regional community outcomes? How important is a broad collaborative approach in “*delivering on the four well-beings*”? Some council’s have clearly made more headway than others in providing answers to these questions.

What are the implications for local authorities and the role of elected members in ongoing collaboration and relationship building? Partly this may be answered by the interpretation of collaboration, partnership, and engagement and the level of decision making attributed to these relationships. At both a political and organisational level shared decision making is about sharing power. Through the development of these processes what sort of shifts are we seeing or expecting to see in the distribution of control at a local level? Contributors to this work have made direct comments about a move from representative to participatory democracy. If this is so, what are the implications of increased public participation for elected members? How might their role evolve in response to greater community decision making and shared responsibility? The examples provided for this exercise indicated that the role of a councillor has changed from a meeting facilitator and chair to ‘*a member of the community*’.

At an organisational level officers have commented that the LGA2002 is facilitating a more holistic approach in operational management. There is a feeling that these new ways of working are not only breaking down external silos, but internal ones as well. Several participants commented that changes have required or will require closer working relationships between the strategic, planning and finance parts of councils. How is this internal collaboration changing the culture of councils? Officers have also commented that these processes require councils to go to the community with the intention of listening rather than presenting pre-determined answers. How might this subtle but profound shift in approach change the way officers and councillors do their job? How are council staff being supported and up-skilled through these changes?

What are the most effective structures for engaging the wider community in identifying outcomes? In the examples provided, councils have engaged people by emphasising their ‘sense of place’ (place-based), their interests, or both. Within this wider context communities have been involved in a number of different activities organised by councils. These have aimed at drawing out ideas and priorities. This has included public meetings and forums, though not all believe these are the most effective methods of engagement. Some councils consider that public meetings only allow those with the loudest voices to be heard and have limited demographics. Others believe public meetings and forums allow members of the community to, ‘*test their issues and positions with the wider community*’ as well as help to build a sense of place. They were also seen as a, ‘*transparent method of demonstrating consultation*’. What context and techniques facilitate successful public meetings and forums? What other community engagement methods can be exemplified as ‘good practise’ and in what context? Is a qualitative or quantitative community mandate required to finalise outcomes?

The formation of community outcome statements have in many of the examples, been developed by councils. Various techniques have been employed to analyse qualitative and quantitative information, grouping ideas and identifying themes from engagement processes. In terms of facilitating community ownership and responsibility toward the implementation of outcomes how important is it to involve ‘*community*’ in the actual process of developing outcome statements? Equally, at what level might the community

be involved in identifying and developing indicators, targets and even implementation strategies?

A number of participants have commented that the process of identifying such 'high level' community outcomes has created little '*community conflict*'. There is a strong feeling however that conflict issues will emerge in the process of implementation. This being the case, will meaningful community engagement, relationship and capacity building, only be achieved through ongoing community involvement in the implementation stages? One council has built upon strategic planning processes to engage place-based communities in debate and discussion about options for achieving a desired outcome. Other councils continue to collaborate with key stakeholders in working toward achieving goals and outcomes. What have been the benefits and challenges they have faced in maintaining ongoing working relationships with government and community sectors? How have potentially conflicting views on 'how' outcomes are achieved been resolved?

A challenging issue for some councils has been the involvement of Maori in the process of identifying community outcomes. A couple of councils have commented that they will need to give greater consideration to including Maori in community outcome process planning in the future. What lessons can be learned from those councils that have developed good working relationships with local iwi and hapu? What lessons can be glimpsed by those councils who have successfully worked with cultural, age or interest groups, either in engagement or process planning? What can be gauged as successful?

Finally, participants have consistently raised Councillor and officer commitment to community engagement processes as key. It is clear that there is a genuine desire and commitment to involve local communities in discussion and debate about the future. Staff have, in many cases had to be responsive to a fluid process and working hours have extended beyond the typical nine to five. In some instances extra resources have not been allocated and good will and enthusiasm has enhanced their success. While supportive team work has contributed to sustaining this situation, is it sustainable in the long term? What value are councils placing on personal continuity in the context of relationship building and community engagement? How will councils ensure that staff time, energy and enthusiasm are sustained in the future?

This is a learning environment; an environment where the sharing of experience can greatly enhance local government's relationship and capacity building and community engagement processes. *Local Government New Zealand* has produced this document as a tool for building upon that shared learning.

Kym Burke  
Researcher

# The Waitakere Way

## Waitakere City Council

### Context - People and Place

Waitakere City is one of eight local authorities in the Auckland Region. The usual resident population in 2001 was 168,750, a change of 8.5 percent since 1996. The city had a slightly higher than average number of people under the age of fifteen. A total of 8.8 percent were over 65 compared with the national average of 12.1 percent. 71.9 percent of residents describe themselves as belonging to the European ethnic group. Unemployment was slightly higher in the city than New Zealand as a whole.<sup>5</sup>

### Process Context

In 1993 Waitakere City Council adopted a vision of Waitakere as an Eco City. The Council comments that at this time it was a *'brave new agenda'* where they *'set about involving communities and business in building a sustainable city.'*<sup>6</sup> It reflected a growing national and international concern around issues of sustainability.

These concerns were being highlighted through international events such as the 1992 Earth Summit and the drafting of Agenda 21<sup>7</sup>, a plan for action. Waitakere City Council was the first local authority in New Zealand to adopt Agenda 21 at a local level. They were also the first local authority in the country to become accredited as 'Safe Communities' by the World Health Organisation.

In 1994 the Council published 'the draft Greenprint'<sup>8</sup>, a set of core operational principles which were to underpin the vision and guide the organisation. In it the Mayor comments, *'Our destination is a new city. The Greenprint is our map'*. The principles include:

- open, honest communication
- responsiveness
- accountability
- partnership
- innovation
- excellence and
- integrity.

The Council reflects that internally, the vision of an Eco-city has very much driven the organisation. All councillors and the strategic leaders within the organisation have been inducted on the three well beings (culture they say underpins everything). They comment that *'Every group manager is responsible for vision as well as operation, and budgets must fit with that vision'*.

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<sup>5</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>6</sup> Long Term Council Community Plan 2003/2004: Waitakere City Council: 2003

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Greenprint; Waitakere City Council; February 1999

Waitakere City Council comment that they have been working collaboratively for over 20 years. In 1996 they began to prioritise the development of collaborative relationships, particularly in respect of social issues. They did this through the initiation of a Well-being Project. This project brought together different groups working on similar issues such as health, education, children's safety and community support. At the same time Council advocated for, and facilitated the development of other collaborative processes such as the development of 'Safe Waitakere'. The process set the foundation for the development of more complex collaborative working relationships between government agencies, community organisations and the Council.

In 2000 the first Wellbeing Strategy was prepared by Council and community networks. A small Collaboration Strategy Group was established. This group consisted of 6-8 representatives from the government and community sectors and council staff. Elected members were very supportive and in some instances were chairs or members of "community groups" (on a personal basis) in mid 2002 the group drafted *'shared strategic outcomes and focus areas for collaborative effort'*.<sup>9</sup> The group also secured funding so that a Project Manager could be employed. This funding was provided from central government ministries and the daily administrative and support, office space etc was provided by Waitakere City Council. The post is managed by a management group including Ministries, WADCOSS and Council. The purpose of the project was *'to collectively identify collaborative focus areas around wellbeing and work together on them'*<sup>10</sup>.

In December 2002 a 'Wellbeing Summit' was held. This was attended by over 170 people from more than 70 organisations. The Summit adopted and mandated the collaborative direction for the City. This process evolved to become the 'Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project' (WWCP)<sup>11</sup>. The project had an overview of four strategic outcomes, three focus areas, as well as seven Calls to Action. These were predominantly focused on social wellbeing.

The two ongoing forums which had been the foundation networks for the WWCP (the Inter-sectorial Group and the Wellbeing Network), continued to support the relationships, planning and ongoing implementation of strategic development of wellbeing in the City. Seven teams comprising Council staff, and individuals from government and community agencies were also established. These teams, *'gathered around a "Call to Action"'*, met to discuss specific collaboration projects. In total 27 projects have been identified to date, three have been completed and 14 are in progress.

The project co-ordinator believes that more work needs to be done on aligning planning processes and sharing information, *'If we can get the right group of people around a table, talking with the right material, we can make huge progress'*. A key challenge they say "is getting the "right people", some organisations don't have people in an appropriate position or they are short staffed and it's difficult to get them to the meetings". They also comment that *'we couldn't have gotten this amount of collaboration without Information Technology(IT) - it would have taken six times as long'*. They recognize however that skill and access to IT are critical, and a challenge for the future.

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<sup>9</sup> Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project paper: Nov 2003

<sup>10</sup> Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project update: Waitakere City Council: December 2003

<sup>11</sup> Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project: <http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/OurPar/collabproj.asp>

Running parallel to this has been the establishment of a joint project between Waitakere City and the University of Auckland, 'Strengthening Communities through Local Partnership Programme'. The programme was launched in 2002 and aims to, '*examine and document the overall range, scope and effectiveness of local partnerships, with particular reference to New Zealand*'.<sup>12</sup> For Council this encompasses 'The Waitakere Way', described in their Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) as a process of growing '*partnerships and collaboration and joint responsibility for tackling issues and creating solutions*'. Council believe that 'The Waitakere Way', is nationally recognised as setting a high standard for collaboration.

Since 1992 the Council has also supported Te Taumata Runanga, a committee that represents the views of Maori in the City. The Council has built relationships with its two Iwi which have been formalised through the development of two Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and other contractual arrangements. Staff comment, '*we are proud of the relationships that have built up over the years*'. Waitakere's current partnerships include, Te Taumata Runanga (Maori Standing Committee), MOUs with Te Kawerau A Maki and Ngati Whatua, MOU with Pacific Islands Community Board, support of a New Migrants and Ethnic Communities Advisory Board; Youth Council, Te Roopu Puawai O Waitakere (Maori Youth Council) and major partnerships with Citizens Advice Bureaux, Waitakere Education Sector Trust, to name but a small number. The key components of the process were collaboration and joint accountability.

### **Process Development**

In 2002, the LTCCP and Annual Plan Special Committee designed a process for identifying community outcomes. A Community Consultation Process Advisory group (CCPA), originally established to advise on the process of strategic review, was involved in reviewing the identified outcomes process. Officers comment that this '*was not as successful as it could have been*'. They believe that, "had CCPA been established after the adoption of the Local Government Act 2002 they would have had a clearer and more extensive remit". With CCPAs involvement in the strategic review, their role was primarily to assist in the identification of groups for consultation rather than as partners in the consultation process.

Council comment that future consideration during the development of the LTCCP 2006-2016 consultation process will be given to how and what role this group can best serve. They also comment that consideration needs to be given to how this can be accomplished without prejudice to the groups current high work commitments to their own organisations.

Ultimately, Councillors led the development of the community outcomes and participated in the identification of processes to support the consultation process. Whilst every officer of the Council was required to participate, as appropriate, the development of the community consultation process was sponsored by two directors, and led by three "strategic leaders" and a strategic planning and monitoring manager" plus a communicator. They worked together to support and implement alongside Councillors, the community consultation plan. In addition to the community consultation plan the strategic leaders were also involved in ensuring that staff were supported to participate in the development of the Strategic Review/LTCCP. Work commenced on engaging with staff in October 2001, several months before any community consultation was commenced by Councillors.

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<sup>12</sup> Strengthening Communities through Local Partnership Programme:  
<http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/lpg/>

## Community Engagement

For the outcomes process, the Council considered that the community was *'any group who has an interest in the sustainability of the City'*. They comment, *'existing partnerships and collaborative working processes and community consultation processes have been key in achieving an understanding of community views'*. In engaging the wider community the Council used a number of techniques including:

- Interactive display boards in malls, libraries, festivals and markets
- Video interviews by youth for youth
- Workshops and community meetings
- Creative conversations (focus groups led by Councillors)
- Questionnaires
- Hui
- Visits to schools
- Letters to the Mayor
- Special editions of the Council's newspaper delivered to every home in the city and presented to all collaboration partners.
- Formal consultation through Annual Plan and LTCCP processes.

The 'creative conversations' gave small groups an opportunity to discuss issues of concern. Some of the conversations were held in Council Chambers while others were held in the community. Councillors always led these conversations. To encourage and extend access to community networks the Council's Officers met with community boards, partners, residents and ratepayer groups. This encouraged them to think about their vision for the future and to consult with their networks and feed back that information to Council.

Video interviews were used at a Youth Concert to capture the views and visions of young people. These have been used to capture the imagination of other members of the community at subsequent events. Schools were also involved. This involvement ranged from children writing letters to the mayor to officers working directly with children in the classroom. Examples of this direct work includes visits by Council Officers to schools to encourage children to relate their daily activities to the role of Council. The Children's Advocate<sup>13</sup> worked in a school to perform a mock council meeting. Officers also spent extended intensive periods working with young people with physical disabilities. This, they say, was about working at the appropriate speed for the children and developing relationships. This work culminated in the provision through the LTCCP of a special Youth "concert" for children with physical disabilities which had been co-planned by Council and the children.

The Council reported back to the community on the overall process by providing a summary document available in all local libraries and on the Council website. They also produced a special edition of Waitakere City News. This was delivered to all households in the city. The Council estimate that in total over 6000 people were engaged in the process. Many of these were direct contacts based on existing networks. They comment that around 1000 children were involved directly with the project and in addition received 1,500 questionnaires on safety returned to Council by high school students.

During the process a sequence of meetings were held between council officers coordinating the WWCP and the community outcomes process team. This ensured that

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<sup>13</sup> A Councillor with Council mandate to hold this position.

strategic linkages were recognised. Information from the community outcomes process was fed back to the Collaboration Network and Inter-sectorial groups. The team facilitating the community outcome process also consulted member organisations separately. This approach was based on the principle of multi-citizenship - speaking from collaborative and individual perspectives.

### **Analysis, outcomes and action**

Once collected the information from the community outcomes process was collated and put into a matrix. Staff focus groups were set up and the information was presented at regular Council committee meetings. Teams were set up to develop the outcomes, all of which evolved from community expressed priorities except for climate change which was linked back to government initiatives and Waitakere's EcoCity vision.

Once finalized the outcomes were developed into the 2020 vision statements which form the five key strategic priorities and the nine strategic platforms (which identify the operational activities of Council) in the LTCCP. The Council also worked with service providers to finalise the performance measures for the community outcomes, the 'big hits' for the next three years, as well as the long term plans for the next ten years. For Council, this follow-through work extended beyond the identification of outcomes to discussing and making decisions on implementation has been essential.

This work was then presented to the community through additional visits to collaboration partners, rate payers groups, community groups, community boards and other partnerships. The draft outcomes were then formally consulted on including being sent to the WWCP groups. Council also ran a household survey to gain a representative view of the proposed outcomes. Council comments that *'whilst the information from the Household survey confirmed the communities views of the community outcomes, the results were quantitative'*.

### **Where to from here**

The Council comment that for them this process has been 'business as usual', with no additional allocated funding. This said, they are now thinking about a process for 2006 and officers say they are asking, *'How do we make it more meaningful'*. While there is no community planning team the Council have a partnership and advocacy team. Their role is to listen to community ideas about different ways Council can work with them. This includes both obtaining feedback on the LTCCP 2003 process as well as identifying ways for improving this process. Council staff have also been included in these discussions.

The Council believe that *'Waitakere City Council and agencies are the constant'*. While they value community issues and concerns they also believe that *'communities that are here today may not be here tomorrow'*. They say that it is going to be difficult to determine who the constants will be. They believe that regional links to date have not been strong, but that *'the LGA will drive that'* and work is ongoing with ARC to develop appropriate processes.

They comment that while Central Government wants to talk to Auckland as a whole, *"community frameworks and structures are all different - capacity and skills are different"*. Officers also have concerns about possible *"lowering of expectations"* around the quality of process if a joint regional initiative was to be undertaken. They also maintain that the right to local solutions for local issues is paramount to the people of Waitakere.

The challenges for next time they say will be *'building robustness'* particularly in terms of economic and environmental well-beings. The Council are also thinking about how to better integrate the wider community engagement process with the work of the WWCP. They want to better integrate their Maori, Pacific Islands and New Migrants and ethnic minorities partnerships as well. Council comments that the LTCCP includes goals from the well-being partnership, goals that *'government agencies and community groups are already working toward'*. They reflect that these goals were not identified by council but adopted by council as they are owned by the communities.

Waitakere City Council believe that the LTCCP should be a collective plan for all stakeholders. They have some concerns about *'consultation overload'* and will be looking for ways to minimize this. One component could be *'utilising other consultation material and processes,'* and being clear about what is being consulted upon. Challenges include the need for external networks to determine how groups and individuals want and need to be consulted.

Officers are also concerned that the data which enables Councils to evaluate their 'communities' needs, and to identify if they are making a difference, is limited. More work on robust solid measures and baseline data is being undertaken. Waitakere City Council and Massey University are partners in a pilot project which is focusing on the development of Genuine Progress Indicators for Children and Youth in the City. The goal is to develop a *'State of the City's Children's Report'* to support the planning for the LTCCP 2006.

Officers believe that the key to success in all their community engagement and collaboration projects can be attributed to a broad range of involvement and commitment by Councillors and Council Officers. They comment *'Councillors sit on all groups and are committed to championing specific issues, they put in a very heavy time commitment'*. Staff commitment and continuity is also viewed as significant in the success of the projects and programmes. They believe that, *'a change in staff could undermine the collaboration process'*, and stress the importance of a *"sustainable team"* for making progress.

Officers comment that the team has had a very *'can do'* attitude and are dedicated to working with communities. However, the outcomes process has increased staff hours and the question has been raised; *"can the new restructured team meet the demand?"*. One staff member comments that officers are increasingly having to deal with conflicting pressures. Particularly, there is an issue around work/life balance; doing the work well while not draining personal resources. They comment that while no extra resources were allocated, there were *'hidden additional costs'* in terms of staff time and energy. They also comment that *"you never have and end product with outcomes"*, that there is always more work that needs to be done.

Waitakere City Council believe that they are *"still learning"* and want people to make suggestions about how to take this forward. They are interested in building stronger regional relationships but at the same time do not want to compromise local community views and participation. They also do not want to lose the momentum they have gained on social issues while building stronger environmental and economic strategies. They comment that it will all be about, *'finding the balance.- to ensure sustainable continuous development of Waitakere - the EcoCity'*.

# Tomorrow's Manukau

## Manukau City Council

### Context - People and Place

In 2001 the usual resident population of Manukau City was 283,197, an increase of 11.4 percent since 1996. A total of 51.6 percent of people identified themselves as European. Pacific peoples identified as 26.9 percent of the total population of Manukau City compared with 6.5 percent of New Zealand as a whole. Unemployment in the City is at 10.1 percent, slightly higher than the rest of New Zealand.<sup>14</sup>

### Process Context

In 1996 Manukau City Council (MCC) initiated a process to enhance strategic coordination for the City. The Council invited government agencies and CEOs from surrounding authorities to a joint Forum. This grouping formed the foundation of a Strategic Co-ordination Group led by the CEO of MCC. The group spent four years working together and building relationships.

Over this time the group recognised that resources were coming into Manukau City with little overarching co-ordination. In 2000 MCC initiated a process which would identify a shared vision and goals to better co-ordinate these resources. The city plan, *Tomorrow's Manukau*<sup>15</sup> was one result of this process. Since this time MCC has produced an interim Long Term Council Community Plan<sup>16</sup> (LTCCP) which identifies the Council's contribution to this plan.

### Process Development

MCC initiated the *Tomorrow's Manukau* process in the belief that this would help focus the efforts of various sectors towards a common vision. Council describes in its LTCCP that it saw its role in the development of vision and outcomes as two fold; *'to bring together the many organisations involved within a common framework for action; to carry out specific projects and provide specific services for which the Council is primarily responsible'*.

To this end MCC initially identified four key process goals:

- to stimulate a sense of direction for the city
- to work out what is important to people
- to ensure a participative process
- to try for a multi-stakeholder approach.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>15</sup> *Tomorrow's Manukau – A vision for Manukau into the Future 2001-2010*: Manukau City Council: Second Edition December 2001

<sup>16</sup> Long Term Council Community Plan 2003/2013: Manukau City Council; 2003

<sup>17</sup> *Tomorrow's Manukau – Ensuring the LTCCP process identifies and delivers key community outcomes*: Leigh Gatt: February 2003

As a first step, Councillors met with Maori to talk with them about how they would like to be involved. This resulted in a tailor-made approach to the various hapu/iwi in Manukau and was conducted in parallel with the remainder of the process.

The Council used the Strategic Coordination Group as an initial sounding board. Some members of this group became members of a newly established Reference Group. The project manager reflects that the Reference Group was made up of *'Action Leaders'* who were *'not a group of representatives, but a collection of opinion shapers, resource holders, and movers and shakers'*, that *'these people understood the need for a vision managed in a participative way'*.

In building a reference group, the project manager points out that *'we wanted to engage key movers and shakers because you can't truly engage a city of 300,000 people to agree a single vision'*. The thinking was that the wider community would be involved in a consultative process but the movers and shakers would help develop the initial vision and strategy.

It was envisaged that the development of a guiding vision and outcomes would help determine goals and associated actions. These actions would be picked up by the organisations that had made a commitment to the process, and the Council.

It was important that the reference group had decision-making powers. The project manager worked with councillors in a parallel process discussing how Council could work with others to achieve broader outcomes. After a series of workshops it was agreed that the Reference Group would have decision-making powers for agreeing on a process and developing values to guide the project. It was also agreed that ultimately councillors would make any final decisions.

The Action Leaders signed *'An agreement to work together'*<sup>18</sup> which encompassed the following principles:

- Work - together to achieve the vision for Tomorrow's Manukau
- Aim - to achieve their goals and targets
- Act - with integrity towards each other
- Encourage - the involvement of all Manukau citizens and communities
- Promote - close co-operation to minimize duplication and build on success
- Strive - to uphold the following values
  - Diversity in cultural beliefs and lifestyles
  - Excellence and success
  - Action with responsibility
  - Honesty
  - Working co-cooperatively.

Upon reflection the project manager comments, *'The whole thing was about building up trust. The motivation underlying the process was getting everyone working together and while we didn't always agree on every decision, we could agree to move on together'*. Council avoided using the word partnership, *'this was a collaborative arrangement, resources were unequal so we could not establish a true partnership arrangement'*. The reference group met at critical decision making points during the process. An officer was

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<sup>18</sup> Tomorrow's Manukau: et at

assigned to ensure that members of the group were kept informed. When members were not able to attend meetings they had the option of a staff member visiting them to discuss and record their issues and views to contribute to the meeting.

## Community Engagement

The reference group developed an approach to achieve the goals outlined above. A set of five key questions were identified. These included:

- Where have we been?
- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- Who helps get there?

These questions were developed through a *'multi-faceted approach'*. In answering the first two questions there was an assessment of historic and current written material. This was drawn from a number of sectors, including a large amount of statistical information that was analysed for trends. In answering the third and fourth question a number of methods were used to engage neighbourhood, interest, age and cultural groups. This included the Pacific Advisory Committee, residents associations and young people.

Youth forums had been run in Manukau for a number of years. These were often well facilitated visioning workshops, the results of which have been presented to the community through dance, drawings and action. The Tomorrow's Manukau project tapped into this well established process. MCC also ran focus group sessions and conducted a citizen survey to gather community input. All of this wove a *'rich tapestry of views about the future of the city'*<sup>19</sup>

The Reference Group provided the answer to the final question and almost all agreed to either lead, or deliver on the strategies in the Tomorrow's Manukau document.

## Analysis and Outcomes

The development of community outcomes for Manukau was based on research which pointed to key themes. This information included not only statistical information but citizens perceptions surveys. Secondary information was developed and tested with focus groups. All the information and views were *'filtered'* through the reference group - the key stakeholders who MCC felt would help to achieve the vision once identified. The project manager comments that, *'These people were our reference group and alongside councillors, became the people who turned the information into a clear direction for the future'*.

The Council used a matrix to develop five key outcomes from the identified themes. These were developed into a draft vision and strategy for the city and agreed by the group. The draft then underwent a two month period of consultation with the wider community. Articles in the paper and a letter box drop raised wider community awareness of the process. The project manager comments, *'this helped to flesh out the direction, to identify broad strategies for action'*.

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<sup>19</sup> Manukau – Ensuring the LTCCP process identifies and delivers key community outcomes: et al

Manukau City Council gave considerable thought to monitoring and reporting on outcomes. The project manager comments *'Identifying targets was a critical step in being able to measure community outcomes'*. *'The Changing Face of Manukau'*,<sup>20</sup> is a monitoring report produced to raise awareness of the social, environmental and economic conditions in the City. The Council used this and the 'Quality of Life in Largest Cities' project<sup>21</sup> to determine targets. This was achieved by comparing national, regional and local statistics and considering future statistical scenarios. In Tomorrow's Manukau, targets have been set both for the outcomes and long term goals.

### Where to from here

Tomorrows Manukau was launched in 2001. The Council continues to measure progress, annually for outcome targets, quarterly where possible for the goal targets and monthly for the actions. Progress has been published through local media and Council publications. MCC comment that *'Good news stories that progress actions are celebrated and reported at every opportunity in the local media and within the Action Leaders' own organisations'*. Outcome results will be published in 'The Changing Face of Manukau'. The outcomes have now been incorporated into the Councils first LTCCP describing MCCs contribution to them.

The Council originally established five Outcome Teams of external stakeholders aimed at achieving each of the five *Tomorrow's Manukau* outcomes. Recent evaluation of the implementation process has led to extending the original number of Outcome Teams to seven to achieve greater focus on the areas of environment, safety and business development. Leaders chosen from within each team meet with each other and Councillors to ensure co-ordination across the five outcome areas and stimulate a sustainable approach. The Council comment that *'this ensures Tomorrow's Manukau is a living document and not just a report on a vision'*.

Manukau City Council reports a number of *'Lessons Learned'* from their process which include:

- The importance of taking people along with you on the journey to ensure buy-in
- Showing the process from vision to action in the strategy and helping it look achievable
- Having a focused approach - not being all things to all people
- Listening to stakeholders - Council and Councillor integrity to the process
- Setting targets rather than just identifying indicators
- Keeping a simple and realistic approach
- Ongoing evaluation and development
- Patience 'it won't happen overnight'.<sup>22</sup>

For Manukau City Council taking leadership in future planning was about encouraging *'key stakeholders and decision makers to take on the vision and have this inform their own strategic planning'*. The project manager comments *'we had a paradigm shift from representative governance to participatory democracy'*.

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<sup>20</sup> The Changing Face of Manukau: Manukau City Council: 1999:

<sup>21</sup> Big Cities Quality of Life Project: <http://www.bigcities.govt.nz/>

<sup>22</sup> Manukau – Ensuring the LTCCP process identifies and delivers key community outcomes: et al

# Tauranga Tomorrow

## Tauranga City Council and Environment Bay of Plenty

### Context - People and Place

The city of Tauranga is located in the Bay of Plenty region and is surrounded by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council. In the last 20 years the population of the City has doubled from 50,000 to 100,000. It is projected that that over the next 50 years 250,000 people will be coming to live in the area.<sup>23</sup> This is reflected in 2001 census data which shows an increase in the usually resident population of 16.9 percent since 1996. This was significantly higher than the national increase at 3.3 percent over the same period. Tauranga has a higher than average 65 plus age grouping making up 17.2 percent of the cities population. Slightly more people identify as European compared to the national average. Unemployment rates are slightly above average at 9 percent compared with 7.5 across New Zealand<sup>24</sup>.

### Process Context

SmartGrowth was started prior to Tauranga Tomorrow and is a joint growth management project co-ordinated by Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Environment Bay of Plenty<sup>25</sup>. The Tauranga Tomorrow project, although having much broader scope than SmartGrowth, has benefited greatly from much of the SmartGrowth project work. The two projects are therefore separate but very much aligned.

### Process Development

Tauranga Tomorrow is jointly facilitated by Tauranga City Council and Environment Bay of Plenty and officially begun in early 2003<sup>26</sup>. Tauranga City established an Outcomes Committee to process the Tauranga Tomorrow information and guide staff decision-making. The following values were then formally adopted to frame the process and guide the working groups and project team.

- *Respect - for the qualities, experience, skills and time each party brings to Tauranga Tomorrow*
- *Te Tiriti o Waitangi - recognising the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi*
- *Communication, integrity and openness - open communication and free exchange of information throughout the process and a commitment to providing honest feedback and reporting*
- *Responsiveness - recognising and being as responsive as possible to the needs, pressures and constraints faced by each party*
- *Learning - seeing Tauranga Tomorrow as a learning process*
- *Sharing responsibility - for the outcomes of Tauranga Tomorrow and for the implementation of the action plan*
- *Trust - that a balance of interests will be strived for that empowers and benefits all parties*

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<sup>23</sup> Smart Growth 50 Year Strategy and Information Plan: Smart Growth Project: 2004

<sup>24</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>25</sup> Smart Growth Bay of Plenty: <http://www.smartgrowthbop.org.nz/>

<sup>26</sup> Tauranga Tomorrow: <http://www.taurangatomorrow.org.nz/about/>

- *Flexibility - to allow the process to evolve with changing circumstances and new opportunities*
- *Encouraging - encouraging participants to raise new ideas and/or challenge traditional ways of thinking to achieve outcomes and goals*
- *Heritage - respecting and recognising the importance of our heritage, cultural, natural and built heritage, to our community*
- *Sustainable - a commitment to creating a community that is sustainable economically, culturally, socially and environmentally.*

A community forum (with representatives from all sectors) was held in June 2003. The purpose of the forum was to gain community-wide agreement on working together to identify a vision and outcomes for Tauranga.

The wider Forum meeting resulted in an agreement from the different agencies and groups to work together and outlined a broad process. A 'Tauranga Tomorrow' team (TT) comprising officers from both Tauranga City Council and Environment Bay of Plenty was established. Seven cross-sectoral working groups were also established with a Councillor and youth representative nominated onto each. An eighth group was identified through the SmartGrowth process to focus on economic development.

The seven working groups were tasked with developing one of seven broad themes. The council comment that these broad themes could also be described as generic headings for discussion eg clean and green, accessibility and so on. The groups initially carried out a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and then *developed* a set of 'goals' and 'actions' to progress these broad themes. The Tauranga Tomorrow team then developed these seven themes into a starting point for broader community engagement.

### Community Engagement

Between October and December 2003 the Tauranga Tomorrow team ran a city wide '*roadshow*'. The team travelled to thirty shopping and sporting locations as well as schools, churches and service clubs. They used displays, visuals and gimmicks to get people to think about elements of the themes asking, "*what do you think*"?

The team presented demographic data on boards which described issues relating to 'where we are now' and 'where we could be'. There were lots of colour photos, and bright orange tee-shirts attracted public attention. A member of the team reflected, '*people liked the visual aspects of it*'. They encouraged the public to use post-it notes to '*have their say*' or talk with staff who recorded what was said. Postcards with basic information were also available to take away and send into Council with comments. The Tauranga Tomorrow project also has its own website where people have been able to log comments. The Tauranga Tomorrow team report that '*there was excellent participation, people were very positive*'.

The team did not hold many public meetings because they felt that, '*public meetings have limited demographics*'. Instead they went out to high schools and intermediates and attended existing meetings such as Grey Power. In addition there was regular editorial in local newspapers and the council publication.

Tauranga City Council report that over 5500 people had a say in the first round of the Tauranga Tomorrow community engagement. They also comment that there was very little conflict in terms of high level outcomes but that this may arise in terms of '*how will we*

*do it*'. During the process the Council's Outcomes Committee was sent updates and information on how the vision and each of the outcomes was progressing. The community could *'see what they had said'* through a fortnightly report back in the Council newspaper and a report back section of the Tauranga Tomorrow website.

In March 2004 a second Community Outcomes forum was held with all stakeholders that had been involved in working parties or maintained an interest through the process. This forum confirmed support for the outcomes and goals. Participants prioritized a series of key actions which will - along with the vision, outcomes and goals, form the basis of feedback to the community. These priority actions will also form the basis of implementation discussions.

### **Analysis and Outcomes**

During the process all post-it notes, letters, postcards and web-based feedback were entered into a database. The relevant material was given to each of the seven working groups who used it to build upon the picture they had already developed. A member of the TT team says *'the working groups got it 80% right - we were looking for the 20% gaps'*. The team believe that the working groups understood that these were the communities outcomes. They emphasis that, *'language is important in the development of outcomes'*, and believe the community need to see themselves in the final product. They reflect that it is important for Council, *'not to manipulate it (outcomes), so that you don't loose what people were saying'*.

In 2004 the team will be out on the streets again in orange shirts giving the community the opportunity to, *'tell us if we got it right'*. While the development of Tauranga Tomorrow continues the Council's contribution to the implementation of the outcomes has been documented in their draft Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)<sup>27</sup>. Council envisage that *'activities in the LTCCP will in 2006 clearly link back to the vision and outcomes in Tauranga Tomorrow'*.

### **Looking Forward**

Tauranga City Council have commented that the Smart Growth process has aligned well with Tauranga Tomorrow. The team continue to assess how the two planning processes might be delivered in an integrated way in the future. Some local groups have also been developing neighbourhood plans. The Council will continue to support the development of such plans. They believe that Tauranga Tomorrow will provide the stable context, *'actions in Neighbourhood Plans provide for local communities to express their needs - higher level vision and goals are stable over time and provide the broad context for the city'*.

At an organisational level a team member comments, *'simply improving decision-making has encouraged the development of a budget with narrative about outcomes and goals'* and that *'this relationship will improve over time where actions are related back to outcomes and vision'*.

The next question for the Council is *'how are we going to measure our progress on achieving community outcomes?'*. They believe that 'The Quality of Life Project'<sup>28</sup> is a key

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<sup>27</sup> Becoming a City – Tauranga City Councils Draft Long Term Council Community Plan 2004 -2014: Tauranga City Council: 2004

<sup>28</sup> Big Cities Quality of Life Project: <http://www.bigcities.govt.nz/>

source of 'outcome' indicators. Organisationally the Council is engaging the public in a Levels of Service discussion, which will set the speed for change and the quality of delivery of those actions that Tauranga City Council is responsible for.

Tauranga City Council has now released its draft LTCCP and is calling for submissions through a formal process. This plan outlines the Council's process of developing community outcomes and talks about how they will impact on Council's business once finalized. In the 2006 - 2016 LTCCP more detailed explanation of the contribution of Council to implementing the identified outcomes will be provided.

The Council will, once outcomes are finalised, investigate measures and mechanisms for reporting on progress. Meanwhile the TT team and working groups continue to develop Tauranga Tomorrow. Council reflects that *'Tauranga Tomorrow is much bigger than Tauranga City Council. Organisations, agencies and individuals from around the region play a part in delivering Tauranga Tomorrow'*<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Becoming a City – Tauranga City Councils Draft Long Term Council Community Plan 2004 -2014: et al

# Future Taranaki

## Taranaki Region - New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki District Councils and Taranaki Regional Council

### Context - Place and People

The Taranaki Region covers three districts, New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki. The usually resident population in 2001 was 102,858. This is a decrease of 3.5 percent since 1996 compared to an increase of 3.3 percent for New Zealand as a whole during the same period. In 2001 23.7 percent of the population were under the age of 15 and 14.2 percent over the age of 65. These figures are similar to the demographic average across the country. 90.1 percent of people identified as European compared with 80.1 across New Zealand. Unemployment in the region sat at 7.8 percent, similar to the national average<sup>30</sup>.

### Process Context

In the past, each of the four councils have worked in partnership with each other on various projects. However, the process for the identification of community outcomes has been the first time that all four local authorities had worked together on a project of this nature. The regional approach has been driven by the Mayoral Forum and has required a strong commitment of staff and resources from each council. The councils believe that the combined approach has been significant to its success.

### Process Development

Following agreement by the four councils on a joint regional approach to identifying community outcomes, a Community Outcomes Project Team (COPT) was established. The team consisted of the chief executive officers or corporate policy managers from each council and other council officers. By agreement of the COPT, a staff member of the Regional Council acted as project co-ordinator. The project co-ordinator was also a member of the COPT.

A project brief was developed which recommended the preparation of an initial report to scope the task and identify and discuss options for developing a process for engaging the community, including key stakeholders<sup>31</sup>. An analysis was undertaken which reviewed community engagement techniques and compared these to the statutory requirements of the LGA 2002. It also provided a number of national and international case studies.

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<sup>30</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>31</sup> "A process for identifying community outcomes: Report to the Project Team", Taranaki Regional Council, May 2003

The report reviewed techniques and methods and within the context of the Taranaki community, available resources and timeframes, recommended four possible process options for discussion by the COPT. The report emphasized that the development of options had been *'guided by the overview of the Taranaki community and by the consultation themes that emerged from the case studies'*.

Due to timing constraints<sup>32</sup>, COPT members comment that the team wished to *'keep a potentially highly complex and involved process as simple, clear and understandable as possible'*. The process options were *"put through a sieve"* (a list of criteria) to assist in determining the final process and associated methods. The following criteria were applied to each of the proposed options:

- Effective participation and consultation (encourage input and feedback from all sectors of the Taranaki community)
- An accurate measure of public opinion (through the use of a scientific survey)
- Integration (of all levels of local and central government and of community groups and organisations)
- Inclusiveness (of all sectors of the Taranaki community)
- Efficiency (the need to ensure the efficient use of public money to maximize the value of the investment in the process)
- Avoiding duplication (collect rather than invent)
- Flexibility (to accommodate differing needs at the local level)
- Clarity and accountability (of roles of different organisations)
- Comprehensiveness (completeness) and
- Lawfulness (compliance with requirements of the Local Government Act).<sup>33</sup>

An approach was agreed upon which *'focused at a regional level but local idiosyncrasies could be provided for where appropriate'*.<sup>34</sup> The preferred option was reported back to councillors for feedback and confirmation. Councillors contributed at various points but their involvement overall was *'low key'*. The COPT members believe it was important that councillors did not direct the process and that they understood that *'these were the outcomes of the community'*. Different councillors held differing views about the levels of control councils should have in developing outcomes.

The broad process format can be summarized as follows:

- Gather preliminary information to develop a community snapshot
- Identify the community
- Inform the community
- Identify community outcomes
- Report on community outcomes and process results.<sup>35</sup>

The key elements of the "Identify community outcomes" phase were:

- The analysis of existing outcome documents

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<sup>32</sup> the process was to provide input into council Long-Term Council Community Plans for 1 July 2004

<sup>33</sup> Future Taranaki: a draft report on community outcomes for Taranaki, Future Taranaki Project Team, Dec 2003

<sup>34</sup> Future Taranaki: et al

<sup>35</sup> Community Outcomes Process: <http://www.trc.govt.nz/community/community.htm>

- Public meetings
- Stakeholder meetings (sector groups, Crown agencies, regional hui)
- Focus groups
- Telephone survey
- Draft community outcomes report and community flyer
- Hearing of submissions and
- Production of a final community outcomes report.

A letter was sent to businesses, community and service organisations as well as to government departments and agencies and Maori groups. The list of stakeholders was aimed at the regional level and was developed after consultation with each of the councils. It asked the various stakeholders to comment on the process the councils had identified in accordance with section 91(3) of the Local Government Act 2002.

Meetings were held with key government agencies and a notice was placed in the regional daily newspaper inviting comment. The responses that were received gave *'overwhelming support'* to a joint approach and considered that the proposed process would be robust. The only concerns related to the relatively tight timeframe set by the councils for the completion of the process.

### Community Engagement

Meetings were identified as a *'transparent method of demonstrating consultation'* however, it was also thought that *'public meetings often have low rates of participation and may be dominated by people with a particular point of view'*<sup>36</sup>. For this reason the councils also held stakeholder meetings, focus groups and carried out a telephone survey. A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods was considered important so that the community could have a high level of confidence in the process and in its results. A research company was contracted to assist with this work.

Initially an analysis of plans and reports containing existing statements of community aims and desires was undertaken. Twelve broad themes emerged, which were used to inform the outcomes process and to stimulate discussion at meetings.

The three public meetings were publicised through:

- the Daily News and local newspapers in each district
- an article in Taranaki Regional Council newsletter 'Recount'
- the "community outcomes" web page on the Regional Council website.

The councils recognised that *'the effectiveness of all meetings would be dependent on the skill of the facilitator'*<sup>37</sup>. An independent facilitator was contracted to run stakeholder and public meetings. COPT members comment that everyone was well briefed and the facilitator continued to *'bring them (the community) back to the bigger picture'*.

While the public meetings (one in each district) did not attract a huge number (between 20-70 people at each), the team believe there was a good cross-section of members of the community. While some councillors did attend the public and stakeholder meetings, this was predominantly in a listening capacity.

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<sup>36</sup> Future Taranaki: et al

<sup>37</sup> Future Taranaki: et al

The councils considered stakeholder meetings to be particularly important. They recognised the potential influence the different sectors have on implementing and achieving identified outcomes. There was good success with representation and participation at these meetings. However, a team member comments *'we were surprised to find that some Crown agencies were not ready to engage in this process'* but that, *'the business meeting was very successful'*. The team comment that there was a lot of discussion and debate amongst groups as diverse as the oil and gas industry, education providers, the Multi-ethnic Council and various church groups.

A regional hui was also organised for local Māori. Letters were sent to representatives of each of the seven iwi in Taranaki. The letters contained a wide invitation to those representatives to invite such members of their iwi and affiliated hapu as they considered appropriate. The hui was held at a marae in Waitara (in the New Plymouth district). Māori liaison officers from the New Plymouth District Council assisted in the organisation of the hui. Despite this, the meeting was not as well attended as was hoped. The COPT recognises that *'councils will need to make continued efforts with Maori as the LTCCP process develops'*.

Six focus group meetings were also held (two in each district). Focus groups were selected to reflect a cross-section of the community (old/ young, urban/ rural, male/ female etc.) and were run by professional facilitators.

A professionally designed telephone survey of the community was seen as having *'a high response rate, a degree of representation across all sectors of the community and a high degree of accuracy'*<sup>38</sup>. Thirty eight statements were developed using existing information and discussion from public and stakeholder meetings. A total of 540 residents were surveyed using a two-stage process (a mail-out questionnaire followed by a telephone survey).

Reports from the analysis of existing documents, the public and stakeholder meetings, the focus groups and the telephone survey were produced by the councils' research consultants. Those reports were presented to councils on the completion of each stage of the process.

### **Analysis and Outcomes**

The COP team believe that the reports developed by the research consultants provided an accurate record of community comment. They analysed the information gathered, using the material set out in the reports. A3 sized sheets and colour coding were used to group the results into themes. Once themed, COPT members worked on developing seven draft outcomes. These were published in a flyer<sup>39</sup> which was delivered to every household in the district. The councils asked residents to indicate their level of agreement with each draft outcome using a 5-level 'strongly agree - strongly disagree' scale.

The results were incorporated into a report on the flyer by the research consultants. An opportunity was provided for residents to record anything they thought was missing from the desired outcomes or to make any other comment.

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<sup>38</sup> Future Taranaki: et al

<sup>39</sup> Have your say about the future of Taranaki: COPT: 2004

The information gathered from the various consultation stages was woven into the publication 'Future Taranaki: A draft report on community outcomes for Taranaki'<sup>40</sup>. This document describes the community outcomes process and lists the identified outcomes. It describes 'what Taranaki people said' and 'how the districts varied'. In these sections the question is also posed, 'who might help us achieve this outcome?'

This document was made available for public comment on the community outcomes website. It was also sent to key stakeholders and made available at council offices and district libraries. A public notice seeking comment on the report was placed in the regional daily newspaper. On the closing date for submissions the Regional Council reports that '*over 900 responses to the community flyer and six submissions on the draft report had been received*'.<sup>41</sup> A final report on community outcomes has now been prepared.

## Looking Forward

COPT members comment that in moving forward the biggest challenge will be '*how to work with other agencies*' to achieve the outcomes. A regional partnership proposal is currently being developed by the COPT which will explore options for structuring partnerships and implementing outcomes. The councils intend to present options to stakeholders for discussion on the most suitable way forward. The team believe that this may range from a minimal agreement where stakeholders '*do their own thing*' to, '*a more structured and centralized strategic partnership*'.

The regional proposal will also set out proposals for monitoring and reporting including a range of possible indicators that might be used to measure progress towards achieving the outcomes. It is hoped that an agreement can be established on around twenty high level indicators that can apply across the region and be reported on regionally. A team member comments, '*if we are smart about it we can make use of data which already exists*'.

Commenting on the overall process COPT members reflect that in retrospect they could have put greater emphasis on '*marketing*' the process. However, they believe that generally they struck a good balance in gathering both quantitative and qualitative information; using methods that gave everyone in the community an opportunity to comment. They say that as always in processes of this sort, judgments will need to be made about 'return on investment' in regards to process.

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<sup>40</sup> Future Taranaki: et al

<sup>41</sup> Community Outcomes process: <http://www.trc.govt.nz/community/community.htm>

# Wanganui's Future

## Wanganui District Council

### Context - People and Place

Wanganui is set within the broader Manawatu region. The district is based around Wanganui city with surrounding rural communities. In 2001 the district had a total population of 43,266, a decrease of almost 2,000 from 1996. Those aged 65 plus made up 16.1 percent of the population compared with 12.1 percent for New Zealand as a whole. The district had a higher percentage of people identifying as European compared with New Zealand as a whole. Unemployment in the district was also higher than average at 9.7 percent<sup>42</sup>.

### Process Context

In 1995 the Wanganui District Council (WDC) began engaging the local community in the identification of long-term goals. This process culminated in the development of a Community Strategic Plan which outlined community priorities. The intention was to review these priorities and changes to the Local Government Act in 2002 coincided with WDC revisiting the plan.

The Council believe that the aforementioned approach of involving community in strategic planning has enhanced their recent community outcomes process. This was particularly the case in terms of institutional understanding and '*on the ground*' experience. As a result of their most recent outcomes exercise Council has adopted seven community outcomes as part of their 2003-2013 LTCCP<sup>43</sup>.

### Process Development

The coordination of the Wanganui District Council community outcomes process was overseen by the Community Outcomes Team (CO team) located in the Executive Office of the WDC. Toward the end of 2002 the Local Government Bill had been drafted, and the Council took note of the requirement to consult with stakeholders prior to commencing a process. At this time the Council initiated talks with key stakeholders about a process for identifying community outcomes. The stakeholders included two Iwi, Police, the DHB, UCOL and WINZ.

The Council notified the proposed community outcomes process through public submissions. As a result of one submission the process was amended to include a submission period for comments on the draft outcomes. Once these were defined a workshop was held to brief Councillors.

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<sup>42</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>43</sup> Long Term Council Community Plan 2003-2013: Wanganui District Council: 2003

## Community Engagement

The council and stakeholders agreed to use meetings as the main mechanism for seeking the identification of community outcomes. In this instance WDC considered 'the community' to be a culmination of various sectors including business, community groups, government agencies, churches, ethnic groups and others. The Council termed the process 'Wanganui's Future'.

The process was publicised through:

- newspapers, including the daily paper and smaller local papers,
- radio advertisements,
- website, and
- direct mail outs, (merging Council databases for business, community groups, large employers, marae, schools etc) as well as utilizing a Police database of Neighbourhood Support groups.

Consultation included a 'rural day out'. This was arranged with the assistance of a person with strong networks in the rural community. The day out included several meetings held in various rural communities. Letters were also sent to Neighbourhood Support Group coordinators. This was achieved by collaborating with the Police. The team believe, *'this engaged people who might not have otherwise been involved'*. A regular 'Council update page' in the daily paper provided feed back to the community on what people were saying on specific issues. This generated further interest as groups with alternative views wished to have a voice in the process.

The Council took a *'going to where the community is'* approach to arranging meetings. Community members were encouraged to become 'meeting hosts', choosing a time and venue to suit any particular group. The development and use of a web-based booking system proved very successful in supporting this process. The system allowed 'meeting hosts' to arrange meetings directly on-line including a calendar showing available times. People could also phone, email or write to make a booking and both the Customer Service staff and CO team used the system to arrange meetings. The CO team would confirm in writing each meeting and identify for each week who was available at what times.

Flexibility and commitment from Councillors, management and staff were key in the success of this approach. Those members of the community booking the meeting also played a key role, becoming the main point of contact for Council mail outs and updates. Council held 'meeting host' orientation talks to discuss the process and build confidence in what they describe as *'community networkers'*. Feedback from the community confirmed that this overall approach was appreciated, giving them some control over the process.

In total 89 meetings were held over eight weeks in early 2003. While the Council asked that groups be around 10-15 people, no one was refused and numbers ranged from three to eighty plus. Meetings ran for around two hours, though some were up to four hours long. The team also worked in with regular community group meetings and would take any time they had available during their meeting for community outcomes consultation.

Overall an estimated 1000 people participated. The team monitored meeting bookings and if a particular group or sector were not involved they would use their community networks to encourage participation. Youth and rural communities were two such groups,

emergency services were another. The team, attempted to hold marae based workshops, however these did not eventuate.

Each community meeting was attended by a Councillor, a senior Council officer (usually a member of the Council management team), and an officer taking notes using a laptop. A short presentation was given (often speaking to a hard copy) followed by discussion. The presentation included some information, both qualitative and quantitative about the District and a report on the priorities that were identified in the Community Strategic Plan. Meetings were recorded on large sheets *'so that people could see what they had said'*. Day-to-day 'fix-it' type issues such as road maintenance were recorded and duly fed into the Councils Customer Service System to be actioned. A team member reflected that *'they needed to get these things off their chest, it helped them to move on'*.

While groups were encouraged to list priorities at the end of each meeting, this was largely done as part of the final analysis by Council officers. The team believe they were careful not to make promises to people but to *'take their issues into account'*. In terms of community conflict, the team found that at a high level there was a good deal of agreement on outcomes. However, they recognize that there would be more disagreement within the community about the mechanisms for achieving these.

Councillors played a key role not only by attending, but also in facilitating meetings. The CO team comment that what worked well about this approach was increased Councillor 'buy-in' to the process. While this was seen as important it was also recognised that Councillors do not always have strong facilitation experience. Providing training or an independent facilitator could enhance any further work undertaken in this way. A member of the CO team commented, *"the community appreciated the Councillors fronting up so they could talk to them directly"*. It was also acknowledged that having Councillors so closely involved enhanced decision making, *"it helps Councillors focus on long term issues, there's more stability day to day when they are focusing on overarching outcomes"*.

The team attributed the success of their meeting programme to previous experience which enabled them to refine the process. They commented *'we knew before we started that we had to be prepared for everything - we had to take everything including Council Reports, and keep it low tech'*. The meetings were a positive experience for staff too, *"we all have stories about meetings that we enjoyed - it was a good process for staff"*.

## **Analysis and Outcomes**

The notes from meetings were entered on qualitative analysis software (NVivo). Some difficulty was encountered in analysing the comments because of different styles of note taking. In retrospect the team reflect, *'how you write comments is important'* and would consider training people in transcribing techniques in the future. The system allowed the team to code issues, interlink data searches and report on themes. It also ensures community comments are held so that, *'you don't lose anything that was said'*.

Once entered the data was coded by issue. Ninety two issues were identified and then ranked against how often they were raised. Using cross-referencing 25 priorities were identified. Seven internal Council groups were formed, based on the relationships between the priorities, to analyse the information and, write one community outcome each.

This set of outcomes was then sent to 'meeting hosts' and wider community comment was sort through formal consultation processes. The outcomes were finally adopted in December 2003. The CO team acknowledge that the final outcomes are based on predominant wants and that conflicting issues have not been resolved. However, the team report that the community are *'generally happy'* with the outcomes that the Council had developed.

## Looking Forward

Wanganui District Council say they are now in the action planning phase. This entails gathering baseline information needed for monitoring outcomes. Some of this information will be obtained from their 'State of the Environment Report', some from other agencies. There will be internal action plans developed, then, *'we will be going out to the other agencies who are capable of contributing to community outcomes'*. The Council intend to engage other stakeholders through existing forums working with them to develop a process of implementation.

WDC is also looking at how to align internal processes with community outcomes. This will ensure appropriate reporting on outcomes and clarify how Council will contribute to these. One team member comments that this process is driven by the question *'How can we get better at representing what we do?'*. In moving toward this they intend to use INTERPLAN, a strategic planning database. The CO team believe this will assist by *'storing the huge quantity of data required for each action plan and it makes reporting easy'*. There is also a belief that community outcomes will help create better interrelationships within the organisation, breaking down the *'silo mentality'*.

The CO team recognize that the process of developing community outcomes has been resource intensive and did require a major time commitment. However they point out, *'we assume a lot of things when we (Council) go into the community. We have been constantly surprised at how things have changed (since 1995)'*. They also acknowledge how important it has been to have strong leadership and support from the top of the organisation.

# Choosing Futures

## Kapiti Coast District Council

### Context - People and Place

The Kapiti Coast District covers the northern-most part of the Wellington region. In 2001 the usually resident population was 42,447, an increase of 10 percent since 1996. The number of people aged over 65 equates to 22.3 percent of the district's population, double the New Zealand average. A total of 91.9 percent of people identified as European at the last census compared with 80.1 percent for New Zealand as a whole. Unemployment in the region sat at 7.1 percent<sup>44</sup>.

### Process Context

In June 2003 the Kapiti Coast District Council (KCDC) embarked on a process of identifying community outcomes. This was timely as the Council's Strategic Plan was ten years old and due for review. The process was called 'Choosing Futures' and varied significantly from the way the Council engaged the community in the past. Previous processes focused on formal consultation where Council developed ideas and the community commented. A key component of 'Choosing Futures' was its focus on community, both as leaders of the process and bringing forward their issues and concerns.

### Process Development

Development of a community outcomes process was driven by an Elected Members Process Group and supported by the CEO and management. The project team included co-project managers, the CEO, all divisional managers, the district planner and other staff. One of the project managers comments *'It was key to have a high level team driving the process'*. The newly established Elected Members Community Plan Process Group had input into the development of the process and was updated on progress on a fortnightly basis. The team believe this was key to ensuring the Elected Members, and staff, had a clear role in the process.

The initial planning stages of the process were aimed at raising the profile of the project within Council and to encourage staff 'buy in'. Elected Member workshops and staff forums have helped to achieve this and are ongoing. The sessions assisted in refocusing the Council's key driver as well as providing an opportunity to involve staff in the development of the project. A team of over 40 staff assisted the Project Team with the actual community sessions and another 30+ provided specific expert and administrative support. The project manager points out that *'staff know what's going on out there in the community - it's about valuing peoples knowledge'*.

The team also recognised that the process of identifying community outcomes required new ways of engaging with the community. They again organised workshop sessions for Elected Members and staff and contracted an independent facilitator to run sessions on

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<sup>44</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

facilitation skills to engage the community and encourage them to debate and discuss their ideas. The project manager explains that this was a subtle shift from going to the community with answers and justifications towards listening to what people have to say. There is a belief that this process is *'changing the culture'* of the organisation.

The Council worked alongside local Iwi to provide them with resources related to the process and to run specific sessions. A number of groups were actively involved in providing input into the community sessions and support was also provided to community groups to run their own process. Feedback from these was then fed into the main process.

## Community Engagement

Kapiti Coast District Council chose community based sessions as the primary format for engaging with the community to identify outcomes. Within this framework they ran 42 community meetings which were either area or issue based, and a winter lecture series.

Prior to the first meeting the Council developed a public awareness campaign entitled 'A Chance to Dream'. A publication<sup>45</sup> was developed and the Chair of a local community board wrote an article about future planning in the area. The project manager explains that the Council went to the community with a 'Can do' philosophy. While they planned for the meetings to be charette style the Council recognised that, *'people needed to talk about their stuff first'*.

Ultimately, the process was guided by the community and this required flexibility on the part of the Council. The team made GIS maps at varying scales available and this encouraged people to talk about their neighbourhood, finding first their house, street and other local landmarks. Display boards with demographic information provided people with the broader community context. A full length GIS map of the Kapiti Coast District as well as one of the Greater Wellington Region provided a platform for discussions about the inter-connections of communities and the sustainability of the district. People recorded issues they thought were important on post-it notes which were stuck onto the maps. Team members recorded these on to a laptop at the sessions. The team believe that the process was one of *'hearing community ideas'*, encouraging people to talk together and engaging normally quiet members of the community. They also believe that the process helped to validate people's sense of place.

An AO sheet entitled 'Parking Lot' was available for people to record issues that needed immediate attention. The team called these 'yellows' and they were taken back to Council as issues to be addressed in the short term. During the process 'footpaths' were raised often as an issue for residents, some with mobility scooters unable to negotiate uneven terrain. As a result of these comments Councillors decided to change the council work programme giving more resources to the upgrade of footpaths in the short term rather than an allocated maintenance programme over the long term.

In this way the team felt they were building communication by getting things done. These achievements the team termed 'Beacons'; signals to the community that they were being heard.

The Council also encouraged the community to put in written submissions, following the philosophy, *'tell us in the style that suits you'*. Some groups approached the Council

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<sup>45</sup> A Special Newsletter from the Kapiti Coast District Council: KCDC: June 2003

asking for a speaker to come directly to a group meeting and the team were happy to do this. They also encouraged group members to come to a community session where they could, *'test their issues and positions with the wider community'*. An independent group was established to look at environmental issues and provide feedback/comment to the process.

The Council did not define community from the outset but were clear that *'people cannot operate in isolation'*. By holding community based sessions the team were encouraging *'groups to put forward ideas and have them tested by other members of their community'*. The Council believes this process also assisted the groups by raising their profile. Notes from the meetings were recorded and sent back to those who elected to sign the meeting registers. These have also been displayed in Libraries, at Council reception areas, on the Council website and through fortnightly 'Report Back' pages in the local newspaper. Feedback from the process was extremely positive, however some have criticised the process. The Council consider that this was perhaps because it has been markedly different from the usual consultation methods in that it gave people in the community the leading role.

During the Choosing Futures project Councillors adopted different roles. Initially the Councillors were involved in identifying and setting the process as well as identifying key people in the community who would have a useful contribution to make. The Mayor wrote to all these people and invited them to become involved with the process. During the community sessions they played the role of listener and encourager. As the information came in and was processed they were able to identify gaps during a series of workshops. Finally they have moved in to the role of decision makers. Throughout the process the Councillors Process Group was kept fully informed and provided direction for the officers.

The project manager reflects that the Councillors were very supportive but the length of the process meant the challenge was to remain connected throughout. Now outcomes have been identified, the Councillors have a significant role in making decisions about how Council can contribute to achieving the outcomes. To guide these decisions Councillors and staff developed a set of sustainability principles. The Team believe that decisions are now mandated by the community.

Being amongst the community where *'things were happening'* was an important part of the success of the project, as was *'making the process accessible'*. Accessibility was largely due to the commitment and flexibility of the staff involved. A total of 42 sessions were run over a three month period and staff spent long hours out in the community at irregular hours. The project manager comments, *'staff time was important, it was a stressful process, but we had a good supportive team'*.

### **Analysis and Outcomes**

Council used Mind-Mapper software to analyse the collected community ideas. The information was put into the database and developed into a number of themes layering back to issues. Once developed the team took this material back 'On the Road Again' for a total of 25 community sessions. At these meetings display boards were used to show the process to date, what people had said and present the mindmaps.

The Council asked what people thought of the themeing and used a standard form to help in the prioritisation of issues. This data was then also feed into the Mindmap software for

analysis. Seven key ideas were developed from the mindmaps. These have been developed into community outcomes through officer and elected member workshops.

The draft outcomes have been presented back to the community in a 'Choosing Futures' newspaper supplement<sup>46</sup>, which was delivered to every householder in late January 2004. The Mayor and Councillors comment in the paper that *'There is a remarkable consistency in the ideas that have emerged. Where there are difference of opinion, this lies in the detail, not in the overall vision'*. Staff have also given consideration to monitoring outcomes and developed indicators.

The team believe that the Community Outcomes clearly identify the Kapiti Coast community vision for the future. The "Kapiti Coast Choosing Futures - *draft* Community Plan", which will again be delivered to all householders, takes this further by describing what the Council will do to contribute to these outcomes. The project manager describes it as *'setting out the Council's leadership vision, how it will work with the community and the suggested investment priorities for the next 20 years'*. It also identifies partners in that work.

### Looking Forward

Kapiti Coast District Council are currently discussing, with other authorities in the region, a joint approach for 2006. The project manager comments that as well as building wider regional partnerships, Council has *'a role in education'*. This role relates to raising awareness within the local community about the collaborative nature for achieving community outcomes. While there are some comments that the process has raised expectations the team believe that *'people understand long term planning'*.

The project manager comments that the process has influenced the way the Council operates, *'this is a whole of council approach'*. Increasingly forecasting in budgeting will be expected as Councillors reprioritise funding to assist in the achievement of outcomes. At Kapiti Coast District Council all significant planning issues now need to come through the Community Plan Team. This assists in the alignment of Council and community needs and priorities. The team also believe that internally, this approach is breaking down the traditional silos and encouraging staff to think in new and innovative ways.

The Kapiti Coast - Choosing Futures project was implemented with no extra resourcing and such an intense process could not be sustained in the long term. How the Council resource the process in the future and how it sits within the organisation will be issues for continued discussion.

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<sup>46</sup> Kapiti Coast Choosing Futures: Kapiti Coast District Council: January 2004

# Future Path Canterbury

## Ashburton, Banks Peninsula, Hurunui, Kaikoura, Selwyn and Waimakariri District Councils, Christchurch City Council and Environment Canterbury

### Context - Place and People

The Canterbury region consists of one city and ten districts. Each has its own local authority. The area also has a regional council, Environment Canterbury. The total residential population in 2001 was 481,431, a change of just 2.9 percent since 1996. Of those, 91.8 percent of people described themselves as belonging to the European ethnic group. Unemployment in the region was slightly lower than the national average in 2001<sup>47</sup>.

### Process Context

In 2000 Environment Canterbury identified that requirements of the Resource Management Act (RMA) were not going to address strategic management issues over the long term. To address this the Regional Council initiated and funded a long range strategic planning programme. The district and city councils became partners in the project branded Future Path Canterbury. This was initiated in 2001, before changes to the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA2002) were developed. With the adoption of the LGA2002, FPC was reconstituted under the Mayoral Forum, which had been meeting since 1999. The Forum agreed to embark on a regional approach to meet the Act's requirements. This approach would include seven councils, those between Ashburton in the south to Kaikoura in the north as well as Environment Canterbury.

### Process Development

Initially, an elected members team was set up to drive the process. The team had representatives from all local authorities involved in the project<sup>48</sup>. They named the process 'Future Path Canterbury' and developed a mission statement and terms of reference to guide the process. The mission statement directs the project:

- *To understand the likely future of the study area in 50 years and develop a vision for that area*
- *To identify gap, linkages and strategies to move towards the vision,*
- *To implement the strategy through appropriate agreements, partnerships and actions.*

A stakeholder group and a technical team were also established. The stakeholder group<sup>49</sup> consisted of sixty individuals. This included more than twenty representatives from each

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<sup>47</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>48</sup> When the project was reconstituted under the Mayoral Forum this team became the Steering Group and included senior members of staff.

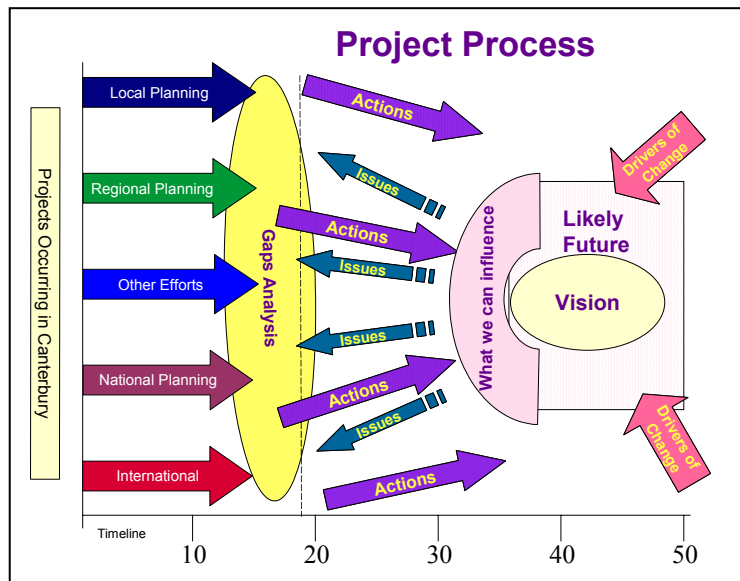
<sup>49</sup> Future Path Canterbury: [http://www.futurepath.org.nz/stakeholders\\_list.htm](http://www.futurepath.org.nz/stakeholders_list.htm)

community, government and business sector. The group worked together to develop future scenarios for the Canterbury Region.

Councils comment that the stakeholders are *'community leaders who have established credibility'* and who, *'act as a catalyst for community participation and response'*.<sup>50</sup> They also believe that this group was vital in promoting the vision within the community and seeking its adoption.

The technical team is made up of officers with specific *'issue related'* skills. Their role has been to provide support to both the elected members and stakeholder groups as the process progressed. The planning process was developed by the Technical Team and signed off by the Elected Members Team. It can be summarised as follows and is illustrated in the following diagram:

- Community profile and trend statement
- Scenario development
- Community engagement
- Vision statement
- Review gaps
- Develop action plan.



## Community Engagement

The goal of FPC has been to *'develop and agree upon a broad-based community view of what we want the future to look like, and pursue the achievement of it'*<sup>51</sup>. For this to be successful the Future Path project considered that *'Visions only work when communities are involved in developing them'*<sup>52</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Future Path Canterbury presentation: Alice Ann Wetzel:

<sup>51</sup> Future Path Canterbury: Issue 1, February 2002

<sup>52</sup> Future Path Canterbury: <http://www.futurepath.org.nz/partic.htm>

Initially staff collected data, analysed trends and formulated a community profile. This was used as the foundation for a public seminar series consisting of six presentations. A 'Community Values Survey' was also conducted. A total of 650 residents living in the project area were asked in a telephone survey what they liked and disliked about living in Canterbury.

This information assisted in building a community profile or 'snapshot' report of major issues. The 'snapshot' information was presented back to the community on the FPC website<sup>53</sup> and in a 'Future Path' newsbrief. The tabloid provided a vehicle for raising awareness and interest, keeping people informed and reporting back on the process. The purpose of this initial work was to provide communities with sound information upon which to engage in informed discussions.

The next phase of the process involved stakeholder groups developing future scenarios. Workshops were held to facilitate this process. The groups were tasked with the development of scenarios to be taken to the wider community for further discussion. The elected members team also participated in their development and ratified the final set. At this stage the project team began to engage the wider community in discussion about a regional vision.

As part of the wider community engagement phase the FPC project team emphasised the need to consider different aspect of the past, present and future asking:

- How was it?
- How is it now?
- How will it be?

These questions, among others, were explored in the 'Future Path' tabloid. Following on from this the team began to organize a series of 'Community Conversations' and a 'Future Path Education Programme'.

In total, the councils held 32 'Community Conversations'. The format of these varied depending on the demographic and size of the group. The meetings were publicised through major papers. In retrospect, the team realise they could have made more use of local media, based on the realisation '*people get information in different ways*'. The project coordinator also comments that a regional approach '*needs the support of the local councils to tap into local networks*'.

A combination of officer and independent facilitation was used. In some instances impartiality in facilitation was an issue and when that was the case independent facilitators were employed. The team developed tools to help initiate discussion and record opinions and ideas. Seven different theme sheets were produced containing photos, future trends and questions. The sheets also allowed space for the team to record comments and concerns. These worked well because of their informative and visual nature. At the completion of the community conversations, to validate the information the team ran another telephone survey.

Councillors attended meetings and, while in some cases welcoming the community to the process, were there predominantly to participate in the same manner as any other

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<sup>53</sup> Future Path Canterbury: <http://www.futurepath.org.nz/thestudyarea/thestudy.htm>

community member. The project coordinator emphasizes, while councillors are part of the community, *'these were community conversations, not councillor conversations'*.

Key elements of the success of the conversations included:

- providing food (prepared by local groups)
- selecting a variety of times and locations
- being creative and flexible
- having fun, with a light hearted tone; and
- capturing comment where possible (in both formal and informal settings).

A total of 21 schools participated in the 'Education Strategy for Future Path Canterbury'. Councils propose that it is important to involve children and young people in a visioning process because they will be *'the leaders of Canterbury in the future'*.<sup>54</sup>

The team prepared three 'Lesson Outlines' aimed at primary, intermediate and secondary schools. All three lessons culminated in the preparation of a mural depicting 'Future Canterbury'. While the team successfully engaged primary and intermediate level children, they found the curriculum for secondary schools was planned too far in advance to include an extra project.

FPC team sum up the process of community engagement and 'getting to the vision' as:

- 2 Telephone Surveys
- 4 Tabloids
- 5 Elected Members Meetings
- 5 Stakeholder Group Meetings
- 6 Seminars
- 21 School Programmes
- 32 Community Conversations and
- 4600 Ideas.<sup>55</sup>

## Analysis and Outcomes

In total the councils collected 4,600 community ideas through the FPC process. These were collated and categorized into themes by the technical team and meeting facilitators. Seven major themes were identified as well as a number of sub-themes. These were further developed by an editing team, and finalised by the technical team and the steering group.

The themes have now been developed into a vision and a small publication has been produced<sup>56</sup>. The project coordinator comments that the difference between the development of outcomes and vision is that, *'outcomes have to be measured against - vision does not'*.

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<sup>54</sup> Primary Schools Lesson Outline: Future Path Canterbury

<sup>55</sup> Future Path Canterbury presentation: et al

<sup>56</sup> Canterbury: weaving together people places and opportunities: Future Path Canterbury

## Looking Forward

The FPC process was initiated to identify community vision, the output of which is not dissimilar to a possible set of outcomes. However, staff at Christchurch City Council comment that this process missed the concept of community planning because it, *'did not involve the community in defining the process'*. This said, it is also clear that the councils believe that *'Councils and communities in Canterbury have a head start on implementing the Act because we're already working together'* and that the *'long-term vision will provide direction to help shape community outcomes'*.<sup>57</sup> Waimakariri District Council comments that *'The Future Path group is responsible for the initial consultation concerning the process to be used to identify Community Outcomes'*.<sup>58</sup>

The process, while successful, has for some, proven difficult. Issues relating to a regional vs. local approach have created tensions. Issues have also arisen relating to the control of the process. This is particularly so for some smaller councils who do not wish to be forced into a regional approach. Waimakariri District Council considers that there will be a second level to the process, a 'district approach'. They explain that the *'identification of Community Outcomes at district level will fit within the general framework agreed at regional level'*.<sup>59</sup>

The FPC coordinator comments that the question from here on is *'how do we work together?'*. Christchurch City Council considers that there is always a degree of nervousness about inter-councillor processes and that *'people are always reluctant to share power'*. They also ask, *'How do we keep the work we have done and comply with the Act?'*. In relation to the vision they comment that while smaller communities may have a high level of buy-in for the current vision, Christchurch is too big and *'people do not realise what local government does'*.

A project coordinator has been employed to facilitate a regional community outcomes process. This person is employed by all of the participating councils, and is based at Environment Canterbury. Currently, councils are discussing a framework for strategic partnerships. There is a need from some to have a defined process prior to wider engagement. However, staff have a mandate to explore with stakeholders how the process might look and believe this a much more 'emergent' process. The FPC coordinator also comments that while people like certainty, *'there are no right answers, (FPC) is a messy people based process'*.

The FPC coordinator considers that the new role for councils in identifying community outcomes will have a significant impact on individual organisations. This process will also force the strategic, planning and finance parts of councils to work together. This, they believe, will encourage the valuing of differences and *'make us think about what council business is and how we are targeting it'*. They also consider that this is a move away from representative democracy to participatory democracy.

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<sup>57</sup> Future Path Canterbury – How you can be involved in shaping our regions future: Future Path Canterbury flyer: 2004

<sup>58</sup> Waimakariri 'Response to LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND email survey', 16 March 2004

<sup>59</sup> Waimakariri 'Response to LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW ZEALAND email survey' Ibid

# Place-based Community Plans

## Queenstown Lakes District Council

### Context - Place and People

Queenstown Lakes District sits within the Otago region. This encompasses Queenstown, Wanaka and a number of smaller communities. In 2001 the district's usually resident population was 17,040, an increase of 19.3 percent since 1996. This is significant compared to the 3.3 percent increase experienced by New Zealand as a whole over the same period. The district also has a high visitor population. People under the age of fifteen and over sixty five make up less of the total population than they do nationally. 93.5 percent of people living in the district identify as European, this is higher than the national average. The unemployment rate of 2.6 percent is significantly lower than the rest of the country<sup>60</sup>.

### Process Context

In December 2001 the newly elected Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) committed to identifying a vision for the district. The Council wished to embark on a process of clarifying strategic direction. It also had a strong desire to involve communities in that process.

With two community plans already in existence and actively used (Glenorchy and Arrowtown), it was decided that the development of place-based planning would become the mechanism for involving communities. Since early 2002 QLDC has developed, with local communities, eight place-based community plans<sup>61</sup>. These include:

- Tomorrow's Queenstown
- Wanaka 2020
- Arrowtown Community Plan
- Kingston 2020
- Makarora Community Plan
- Hawea Community Plan
- Luggate Community Plan
- Cardrona Community Plan

The Glenorchy Community Plan<sup>62</sup> is somewhat different in the fact that it was undertaken as a community initiative in 2000 - 2001, prior to the election of the new council.

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<sup>60</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>61</sup> Tomorrow's Queenstown: 2002, Wanaka 2020: May 2002, Arrowtown Community Plan: February 2003, Kingston 2020: November 2003, Makarora Community Plan:, Hawera Community Plan: June 2003, Luggate Community Plan: September 2003, Cardrona Community Plan: December 2003.

<sup>62</sup> Glenorchy Community Plan: 2001

## Process Development

QLDC (and the Wanaka Community Board) believed that commitment to a shared vision would:

- guide decision-making
- provide for long term planning
  - infrastructure and services
  - environmental protection
  - social
  - financial allocation and prioritizing
- give focus/certainty for the community (communities)
- provide a context to measure results and mark progress
- reduce conflict and optimise council effectiveness
- assist in managing change/development<sup>63</sup>

The Council approached other local authorities and relevant government agencies in an attempt to build strategic relationships. The project manager contracted by Council to facilitate the Wanaka 2020 process comments that *'without legislative directive this proved difficult'* and *'agencies were interested in being involved only in issues that directly impacted and/or involved them'*. In retrospect they say that *'more formal approaches at an earlier stage would have improved this situation'*. This was particularly the case in building potential relationships with Ngai Tahu who expressed interest in being informed of outcomes, but were not able to commit time to the process.

In the late 90's the Glenorchy community drove their own community planning exercise. The process had run over a 15 month period with strong community ownership. The community had hired local Queenstown-based consultants to assist in their process, which culminated in a community plan. In 1994 Council worked with the Arrowtown community to develop a community plan based on charette style workshops. This plan formed the basis for the workshops held in 2003 and resulted in an updated version of the document.

By 2001 there was a high level of interest and commitment from the Wanaka community to develop its own community plan. In February 2002 the Wanaka 2020 Steering Committee was appointed by the Wanaka Community Board to oversee the process. When the Committee was selected, association with community groups was a factor. At least one Steering Committee member was a Board member of Lake Wanaka Tourism.

Part of the Steering Committee's role was to select a lead consultant (with final approval from Council). The project manager for the Wanaka 2020 process believes that, *'it was quite an important part of the Steering Committees commitment to the process that they had a lead consultant with whom they felt comfortable, and whom they felt that they had had a role in selecting'*.

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<sup>63</sup> Report of the Tomorrow's Queenstown Workshop: QLDC: 2002

## Community Engagement

The identified community engagement process was publicised through the local media, rates mail outs and the establishment of the Wanaka 2020 website. In preparation for the Wanaka 2020 workshop the project manager comments that a number of mechanisms were used to *'define issues and frame the workshops focus'*. These included:

- focused sessions with community groups
- two general public meetings
- a questionnaire for youth
- prepared submissions by local groups
- discussion with schools.

Each of the public discussions focused around the following questions as 'thought starters':

- What do you like about Wanaka and want to keep?
- What things would you like to change?
- What is your vision for the future of Wanaka?

As a result of these 'futuring' sessions a number of interest groups established themselves on an ongoing basis. They were interested in presenting a common vision and defining specific needs across a particular sector. Education interests were an example of this. A group of business people were also keen to ensure a youth perspective was presented. They developed a questionnaire and ran activities to get young people involved. While preliminary approaches were made to Ngai Tahu, the views of Maori were not actively sort.

The overall objective for the Wanaka 2020 workshop was developed from issues raised through preliminary community meetings. Facilitation of the workshop was provided by planning consultants. The entire workshop ran over a five day period. Overall an estimated 500 people attended the workshop. The workshops format is as follows:

- Day 1. Set aside for briefing the technical support team with a public meeting in the evening to *'set the scene'*.
- Day 2&3. A series of discussions were held on topics defined through preliminary meetings and community input.
- Day 4. The technical support team summarized and responded to issues that had been raised, including the formulation of design solutions. Recommendations were developed through public sessions. In the afternoon of the fourth day an 'Open House' public session was organised.
- Day 5. The lead consultant, backed up by the technical support team, presented workshop outcomes in the evening.

Parallel to the Wanaka 2020 process Queenstown was developing its own plan, 'Tomorrow's Queenstown'<sup>64</sup>. This document recorded the community's vision, issues and direction for the future. It was also intended that the document would be the basis for:

- Consistent decision-making by Council
- Long-term planning - land use, infrastructure, community facilities, environmental protection, financial allocation and prioritizing

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<sup>64</sup> Tomorrow's Queenstown: et al

- Measuring results and making progress and
- Finding consensus

The process was similar to that of Wanaka with workshops attracting over 400 people over the five days. The process had four overarching components:

- Preview public workshop to set an agenda for the planning workshop
- Information gathering for the workshop
- Community focus in the five day workshop - production of overview plan
- Synthesis of overview plan into a document

The Council reports that participation in the discussion sessions in both Queenstown and Wanaka was *'energetic and extensive'*.

The Arrowtown process was, again, similar to that of Wanaka and Queenstown, although it was necessarily less extensive in that it was more a review of an existing plan than *'starting from scratch'*. The town and the issues were also considered a lesser scale than the two larger towns

The Hawea, Cardrona, Kingston, Luggate, and Makarora communities also worked with the QLDC to develop their own plans. These workshops were less extensive, in recognition of their smaller size and the less complex nature of the issues that they face. Council comment that the workshops were extremely well attended, attracting between 130 people (in Hawea) and 25 people (in the small settlement of Makarora).

The lead-up to these workshops involved a pre-workshop session with the steering committee (which for the smaller towns was the resident's association). There was extensive publicity, using methods agreed to by the steering committee. These methods included posters, letters to all ratepayers, publicity on the radio through media releases, public notices, and by having the steering committees *'spread the word on the street'*.

Importantly, every effort was made to ensure that absentee owners were aware of the event and that the date/ time was at a time that suited them and didn't clash with other community activities. The workshops were generally 1 day long and there was always a feedback presentation of the plan a couple of weeks after the workshop.

Despite different approaches and styles in the focus of workshops the Wanaka 2020 project manager comments, *'the issues and directions of the various workshops was, in the end, very similar'*. Those involved in the planning processes suggest that one of the most important aspects of their success has been the strong support from and involvement by Councillors and Council management.

It is important to note that the Council has formally received and endorsed all nine community plans and used the actions outlined in these plans as the basis for determining much of its three year Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) budget. Wherever relevant, these community plans are considered in Council's decision making processes. All of this aside, these plans remain community documents, first and foremost.

There is an ongoing role for the steering committees (particularly in the smaller communities), in ensuring that the actions highlighted in their community plans are undertaken in a manner that is aligned with the communities' priorities. For example,

these committees were asked to prioritise their projects over the next three years to assist Council in determining its long term budgets.

## Analysis and Outcomes

Material generated from each workshop was collated and in all cases community plans were written up by Council officers or staff contracted by Council. In the Tomorrows Queenstown workshops it was suggested that a report back to the community on progress should be initiated. Council report that, '*This could take place in April or May 2003 in preparation for the Council's 2003/2004 Annual Plan.*<sup>65</sup>. Such feedback sessions occurred for each of the community plans/ in each of the communities.

While Council has since received and endorsed the community plans, they have not been adopted by Council. This means that while the plans contribute to the Councils strategic planning they are not '*Council documents*'.

In response to the Local Government Act 2002 QLDC plan to identify overarching outcomes for the district. By using a matrix approach, the Council say they have been able to ensure that '*the seven key statements that have been drafted (based on those that were drafted for the Tomorrows Queenstown, but adding to and amending these as necessary) faithfully represent all of the community objectives and key strategies that are outlined in the various community reports*'.

All key strategies from all community plans have been fed into this and priority issues identified. Council has compiled the draft community outcomes and these are being fed back to the wider community through various methods. An example of this is the recent Council-initiated Options 2020 project. This process provides the community with opportunities to debate options that the Council has developed for growth management. At recent workshops<sup>66</sup> the outcomes formed the '*cornerstone*' of discussion, and Council asked the community to consider throughout the presentation, how they could best manage growth such that these important desired outcomes are preserved/ ensured.

The outcomes will ultimately be incorporated into the Council's LTCCP.

## Where to from here

Council comment that they will be working to refine their LTCCP between the interim 2004 plan and the fully complying plan in 2006. The Council's Strategy and Planning Manager believes that it is likely that, '*the Council will consider and debate whether community outcomes should be expressed at such a high level or, whether for the 2006 plan, they should be more detailed, and/ or prioritised*'. Council suspect that the strongest conflicting views will be in 'how' the outcomes are achieved and by whom, rather than debate on the outcomes themselves.

As part of the Council-initiated *Options 2020* process QLDC has developed a resource kit<sup>67</sup> with fact sheets and future scenarios to help communities make informed decisions about

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<sup>65</sup> Report of the Tomorrows Queenstown Workshop: et al

<sup>66</sup> Options 2020: <http://www.qldc.govt.nz/frames.asp>

<sup>67</sup> Options 2020 Resource Kit: <http://www.qldc.govt.nz/frames.asp>

issues of capacity and demand for the district. This process allows for the community to debate options for growth management.

Looking forward to 2006 the Council intend to begin building stronger partnerships with stakeholders such as government agencies, business, Maori and community groups. They will also be having further internal discussions about Councils contribution in achieving identified outcomes. QLDC have also recently begun to consider the monitoring and reporting on outcomes.

# Our Way Southland

## Southland and Gore District Councils, Invercargill City Council and Environment Southland

### Context - Place and People

The Southland region includes the districts of Southland and Gore, and Invercargill City. Each have their own Council and the area also has a Regional Council, Environment Southland. The usual resident population in 2001 was 91,002, a decrease of 6.3 percent since 1996. Populations of both young and old are comparable to New Zealand as a whole at 22.6 and 13.7 percent respectively. The percentage of people who identify as European is higher than average at 93.4 percent compared to 80.1 percent for the rest of the country. Unemployment in the region is lower than the national figure at 5.3 percent.<sup>68</sup>

### Process Context

Historically the four local authorities have worked together on a Shared Services Forum. This Forum has proven to be a useful mechanism for encouraging greater collaboration on projects such as Libraries and Information Technology services. Venture Southland is an example of a collaborative approach which presents a regional image and delivers *'Enterprise, Tourism, Promotion, Events and Community Development services to the region'*<sup>69</sup>.

### Process Development

A report to the Shared Services Forum in early 2003 recommended the endorsement of a *'joint proposal'*<sup>70</sup> for the identification of community outcomes in Southland. The report outlined, among other things the rationale for a joint approach. Over and above the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 the report explains, *'adopting a Southland wide approach ensures that regional organisations such as the Southland District Health Board will only deal with one contact'*. Reasons include:

- organisations are more likely to respond to a joint response
- the process needs to be all encompassing to deliver on the four well-beings (as described in the LGA 2002)
- cost savings can be made.

The Forum approved a joint approach and named the project *'Our Way Southland'*. A project co-ordinator was employed by the four councils and operates out of Southland District Council. The co-ordinator works with the Our Way Southland team (OWS) which comprises of two staff from Southland District Council, three staff from Invercargill City Council, two staff from Gore District Council (including the CEO) and four staff from

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<sup>68</sup> Statistics New Zealand: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>

<sup>69</sup> Venture Southland: [www.southlandnz.com/sections/venture/](http://www.southlandnz.com/sections/venture/)

<sup>70</sup> Community Outcomes Identification Process Proposal: Community Outcomes Officers Working Group: February 2003

Environment Southland (including the CEO who is Chair). The team report to a steering group that has three councillors from each of the authorities plus one iwi appointee. The Mayor of Southland District Council says that the project shows that by working together, *'we (councils) are leading the way in New Zealand'*.<sup>71</sup> Some councillors however remain cynical about the LGA and the need for further community consultation .

The initial report to the Shared Services Forum described the Our Way Southland project as a Four-Stage process. Broadly this includes:

1. A profile of the community *'identifying how residents feel about their community today'*.
2. An analysis of social and economic trends and the development of scenarios for the future.
3. Development of community vision and identification of desired outcomes. Also identification of performance indicators to *'monitor the communities progress towards achieving its outcomes'*.
4. Development of an action plan to implement the vision, securing *'accountability'*.<sup>72</sup>

The project co-ordinator developed a 'Consultation Proposal'<sup>73</sup> and has been *'out and about selling the concept'*. This phase is about scoping ideas on both process and issues. The team maintain that, over and above legislative requirements it is vital to have support from other organisations.

## Community Engagement

The Our Way Southland project was launched publicly in February 2004. The consultation phase of the project will run for just over a year, until March 2005. The launch provided an opportunity for councillors, mayors and council staff from across councils to come together. It was also an opportunity to *'get the media on track'* by publicly clarifying the process objectives. The team believe that the proposed process is a very *"bottoms-up" and 'community development model'*. The process is intended to *'Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower'*<sup>74</sup> local communities.

In the initial stages of the project the team planned to provide *'balanced and objective'* information to assist the community in identifying problems, and solutions. A part of this process has been the development of a 'Snapshot Report'. This report is an internal document aimed at assisting in monitoring and reporting on the identified outcomes. The project coordinator comments that some of that information will be used to inform the community but that, *'a lot of that stuff is already known'* and *'there is a risk of sending the consultation out to where it does not need to go'*.

The OWS team initially developed a set of five interim outcomes. These have been the basis for holding 'Stakeholder workshops', inviting groups and organisations from across specific sectors to engage in discussion. These groupings include:

- health and wellbeing
- education and training

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<sup>71</sup> Southland Express: 12/2/04

<sup>72</sup> Community Outcomes Identification Process Proposal; et al

<sup>73</sup> Consultation Proposal; Our Way Southland: December 2003

<sup>74</sup> Consultation Proposal: et al

- economy and employment
- environment and
- lifestyle and culture.

Some of these workshops have already taken place and in some instances turnout was less than expected. The project coordinator comments that this was not due to lack of prompting on the part of councils. Iwi representatives have attended all stakeholder workshops. Around 30,000 postcards asking people to *'Have your say'* were sent out in a regional mail-drop.

The team will also be holding what they term flexible *'hit and run'* meetings with local clubs, businesses, and residents groups. These community workshops engage what the team refer to as, *'the next tier of stakeholders'*. These meetings will be organised on request, either run by the team or the host. Approximately 500-1000 initial prompts have been sent out to groups. The team also intend to hold two Hui.

Youth forums are being organised in collaboration with the YMCA, including an 'ethnic minorities' youth group. The team are going out to secondary schools and will have a stand at the annual youth festival 'Youth Stock'. The team will be meeting with community boards in the Southland region. A number of workshops are also planned to brainstorm with councillors and council staff.

The initial proposal suggests that to be successful the OWS project has to *'successfully market itself to the right people, at the right time in the right way'*.<sup>75</sup> The various vehicles proposed to achieve this include:

- newspaper columns
- up-to-date information on a website
- press releases
- regular interviews and advertising with radio, TV and newspaper
- postcards and posters and
- displays at public events.

In August 2004 the team will conduct a survey of 1,200 households. The purpose of the survey will be to *'confirm initial findings and to target areas under-represented in earlier activities'*.<sup>76</sup> It is expected that an 'Our Way Southland Report' will be drafted in late 2004 for stakeholder input. A draft for wider community consultation will be distributed in early 2005.

## Analysis and Outcomes

The information gathered from the workshops, postcards, telephone survey and other sources will be entered into a database. The team intend to use the database to identify key themes which will then be developed into outcome statements. In developing outcomes the project coordinator comments that *'The report will reflect the majority views, we won't please everyone'*. To date there have been lots of conflicting views on the post cards sent in and while the team expect that the vision will be universal there is some suggestion that, *'steps to achieving outcomes will create more conflict'*.

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<sup>75</sup> Consultation Proposal: et al

<sup>76</sup> Consultation Proposal: et al

It is envisaged that once the 'Our Way Southland Report' has been through a final consultation round the output of the process will be a regional document. This document will include a vision, encompassing the communities desired outcomes and an action plan reflecting the communities priorities.

### **Looking Forward**

The identified outcomes will be integrated into each individual council's LTCCP. These will detail the contribution each will make in achieving the desired outcomes and the priority each will place on these. The team have given some thought to monitoring and reporting on outcomes through the process of developing the 'Snapshot Report' and their transitional LTCCP's in 2004.

The project co-ordinator believes that in Southland, councils are the *'hub of everything'* and that councils have the mandate of the community. They can use this to run their business and work with other agencies. There has been a level of self reliance established with a view that *'central government will let them down'*. The team would like to see central government free up resources so that councils can do more developmental work at a regional level.

## References

Below is a list of references which may assist councils in planning for the development of community outcomes processes and potential techniques for engagement.

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