



**Planning Under
Co-Operative Mandates**

Community Outcome Processes as a Forum for Community Governance

by

Lorraine Leonard and Ali Memon

PUCM LGA Report 3

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Community Governance**

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on the Quality of Environmental
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Preface

This research report on *Community Outcomes Processes as a Forum for Community Governance* is one of a series from an on-going research programme on *Planning Under Cooperative Mandates* (PUCM). The PUCM programme has been progressively evaluating the quality of planning and governance under two devolved and cooperative mandates: the *Resource Management Act* (1991) and *Local Government Act* (2002).

These national mandates emerged from reforms of resource management law and local government in the late 1980s and late 1990s and signal a desire by Government to devolve responsibilities for sustainable development to local government (regional and district), but within a cooperative intergovernmental framework. In 1989, local government was restructured through amalgamation into fewer larger units with responsibility for implementing the *Resource Management Act* (RMA). This gave councils responsibility for the *sustainable management* of the use and development of natural and physical resources, while at the same time ensuring social and economic well being of their communities. This mandate was in effect extended a decade later when the new 2002 *Local Government Act* (LGA) made councils responsible for fostering *sustainable development* in local communities with respect to their environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being.

The basic assumptions underpinning *devolved and cooperative* mandates, like the RMA and LGA, are that regional and local councils are willing to comply, but may not necessarily have the capacity to do so. This in turn assumes that Government will build capacity in councils, by ensuring its own central agencies have the capacity to implement the national mandates (see Ericksen, et al., 2003).

Since 1995, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST) has funded on-going research into the quality of planning and governance under the RMA and, more recently, the LGA, under the umbrella of PUCM (*Planning Under Cooperative Mandates*). PUCM is run through The International Global Change Institute (IGCI) at The University of Waikato and has entered its fourth Phase (2002-2009, contract UOWX0308).

The first three phases of the PUCM programme focussed on quality of planning and governance under the RMA. With no off-the-shelf methods available, it involved developing and testing methods for evaluating the quality of: regional policies and plans and district plans, as well as organisational factors influencing policy and plan preparation (Phase 1, 1995-1998); district plan implementation through the resource consents process (Phase 2, 1999-2002); and the effectiveness of environmental outcomes from district plans (Phase 3, 2003-2009). Each phase includes research on Māori interest under the RMA with Phase 3 focusing on developing and testing a kaupapa Māori research framework and methodology on environmental outcomes and indicators for Māori.

Completing Phase 3 of the research provides the full-circle link between plan quality, implementation quality, and environmental quality for planning and governance under the RMA. The Plan Outcome Evaluation (POE) Methodology that has resulted from Phase 3 of the research will enable councils to measure the effectiveness of their plans. Relating the results from each of the three Phases of PUCM research will enable an assessment of whether good plans make a

difference in achieving the nation's environmental goals under the RMA. (For PUCM publications see www.waikato.ac.nz/igci/pucm.)

Phase 4 (2003-2009) Sustainable Development through Local Government

In 2003, the PUCM team embarked on a new phase of research focused on planning and governance under the new LGA (Phase 4, 2003-2009). It capitalises on the lessons learnt from the RMA research experiences by applying them to the preparation and implementation of the new Long-Term Council Community Plans required by the LGA (Borrie, et al., 2004, PUCM LGA Report 1). Phase 4 is being led by Professor Ali Memon at Lincoln University through a University of Waikato sub-contract.

The research on Phases 3 and 4 (2003-2009) on quality planning and governance under the RMA and LGA was structured around four objectives: Environmental Outcomes from District Plans (RMA); Outcomes from LTCCP Planning (LGA); Environmental Outcomes for Māori (RMA and LGA) and creating a Professional Development Programme, including a Practice Training Programme aimed at certification for planning professionals. These four objectives appear at the top of Figure 0.1 below.

Clearly located in grey in Figure 0.1 below, is the Phase 4 LGA project with its published and proposed reports identified in the lower row of boxes; the one shaded grey being this report on *Community Outcomes Processes as a Forum for Community Governance*.

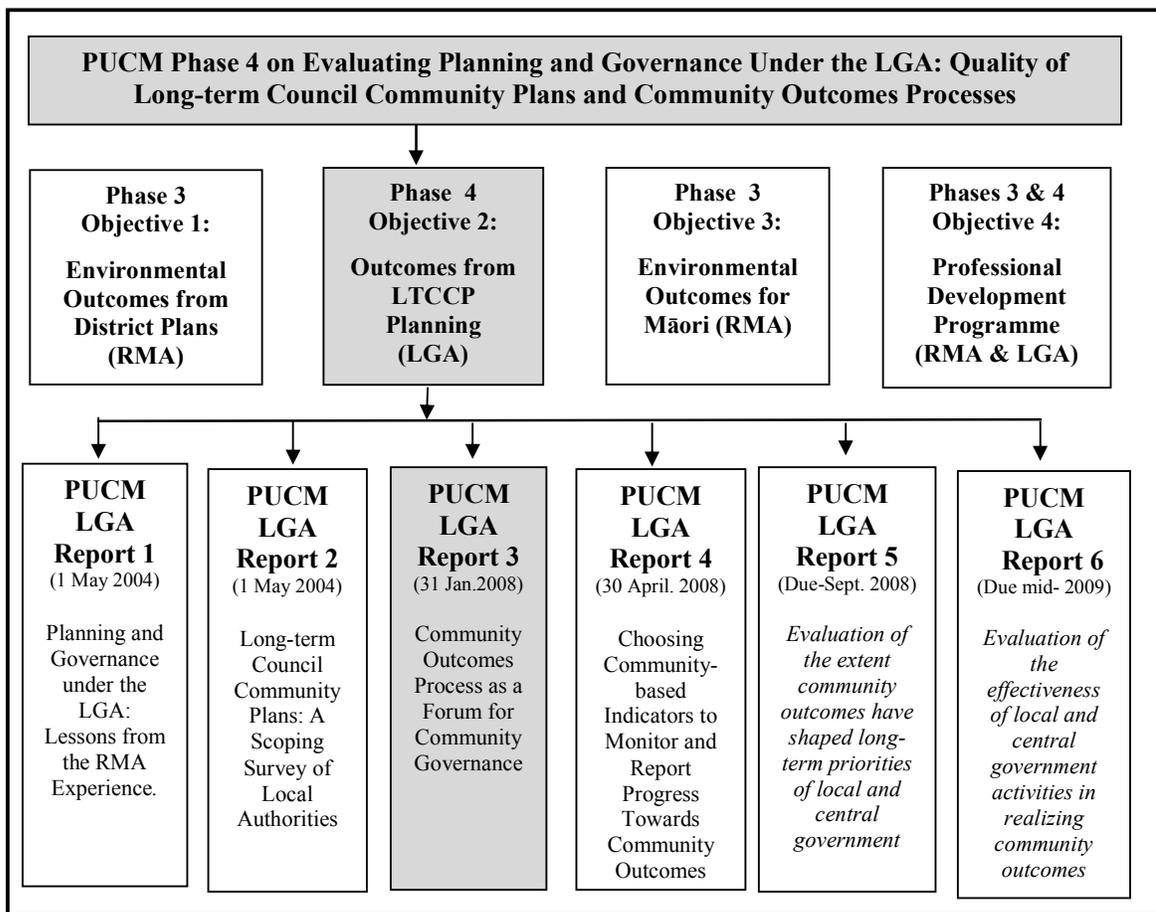


Figure 0.1: This LGA Report 3 in context of the PUCM research project on planning and governance under the LGA (2002).

The PUCM Phase 4 research on quality planning and governance under the LGA is structured around five objectives:

1. map and evaluate interaction between the civil sector and the local and central government sectors in the development of community well-being outcomes and formulation of LTCCP monitoring and reporting frameworks;
2. evaluate the quality of 2006 LTCCPs in terms of the extent to which community well-being outcomes shape local authority long-term priorities (as stated in 2006 LTCCPs);
3. evaluate the extent to which community well-being outcomes shape long-term priorities of central government departments and agencies and other service providers;
4. evaluate the uptake of community well-being outcomes during implementation of 2006 LTCCPs by examining development and implementation of strategic partnerships between local and central government agencies and other service providers (e.g., district health boards, iwi and hapū) to respond to community well-being outcomes; and
5. evaluate progress towards achievement of community well-being outcomes and good governance from long-term council community planning and compare the findings with data collected under LTCCP monitoring and reporting frameworks (2009/2012).

This is the first of two reports that deal with research objective one of *PUCM Phase 4 on planning and governance under LGA*; objective one in effect being to develop a methodology for evaluating the LGA community outcomes processes and the related monitoring and reporting frameworks and applying it to selected councils.

For sake of convenience, the findings from research objective one are being reported as two parallel, complementary streams of work, constituting, so to speak, two sides of the same coin. This report focuses on developing and applying a methodology for evaluating the LGA community outcomes processes (Leonard and Memon, 2008, PUCM LGA Report 3). The other report focuses on how local authorities have interpreted their LGA mandate to develop indicators and monitoring and reporting regimes to track progress towards community outcomes (Johnston and Memon, 2008, PUCM Report 4).

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31 January 2008

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We are grateful for the comments and suggestions we received from the following colleagues on the draft report: Mike Reid, David Corlett, Cathy Kenkel, Karen Johnston, Neil Ericksen and Greg Mason. Our thanks to Gavin Thomas who did some of the interviews with community outcome process participants. The authors take full responsibility for the contents of this report.

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The primary authorship of the report is acknowledged as follows: Section 1 (Ali Memon and Lorraine Leonard); Section 2 (Steven Thomas, Ali Memon and Lorraine Leonard), Section 3 (Ali Memon and Lorraine Leonard), Section 4 (Nancy Borrie and Ali Memon); Section 5 (Nancy Borrie and Ali Memon); Sections 6, 7 and 8 (Lorraine Leonard and Ali Memon); and Section 9 (Ali Memon and Lorraine Leonard). Greg Mason and Neil Ericksen helped revise the draft report.

Executive Summary

Research for this report is part of a project on evaluating the quality of planning and governance under the *Local Government Act 2002* (LGA). It is in turn part of a much larger on-going programme of FRST-funded research into the quality of planning and governance in New Zealand local government called *Planning Under Cooperative Mandates* (PUCM). PUCM has evolved through four phases since 1995. Phases 1 to 3 focused on planning under the 1991 *Resource Management Act* (RMA); Phase 4 on planning and governance under the 2002 *Local Government Act* (LGA).

This is the first of two complementary reports dealing with Phase 4 objective one: to develop and test a methodology for evaluating the LGA community outcomes processes and the related monitoring and reporting frameworks and apply it to selected councils. This report focuses on interrogation of community outcome processes facilitated by local authorities as a forum for community governance. Out of this study we have developed a generic framework for deliberative engagement, which is provided in Section 8 of this report.

The community governance mandate in the LGA (2002) enables community engagement and intergovernmental collaboration for community well-being and sustainable development to an extent not previously witnessed in New Zealand. The Third Way post-1999 Labour coalition governments have been keen to forge stronger links with communities and improve inter-governmental relationships for political and pragmatic reasons. It is hoped that robust and on-going informed deliberative engagement and collaborative decision-making will enable all communities of interest to discover shared values and build up trust. It is also hoped that governmental jurisdictions across a number of interrelated and interdependent policy domains and geographical scales will collaborate more effectively to respond to community needs.

Our evaluation of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance leads us to conclude that local government capability (i.e., commitment and capacity) for facilitating on-going deliberative community engagement is significantly variable. The community outcome processes that councils have facilitated for their first generation Long-Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs) have been a steep learning curve for personnel in local and central government agencies, as well as community participants.

In essence, we find that New Zealanders have failed to fully grasp the opportunity that informed, deliberative community-based engagement offers as a forum for community governance mandated under the LGA. The underlying reasons for this shortcoming are as follows.

Firstly, it is important to appreciate that the paradigm of community governance in the LGA constitutes a new approach to local government, and not just a new function of local government. This appreciation is required of all central and local government agencies and other non-governmental stakeholders, as well as the wider civil society. There is significant danger of local authority members and senior staff and other participant stakeholders seeing the community

outcomes process as a one-off requirement and giving it low profile in the local government setting.

Secondly, the significance of undertaking the task of facilitating community outcomes in a participatory and technically satisfactory manner should not be under-estimated by the policy makers or by the participants. The LGA is aimed at strengthening community governance based on a 'whole-of-government' sustainable development strategic planning paradigm. Community outcomes and indicators to measure progress towards outcomes are an integral part of the accountability and performance enhancement logic model embedded in the LGA strategic planning framework. The success of the LGA is thus dependent to a much greater extent than many seem to appreciate on robust community engagement processes.

Thirdly, the community outcome processes were undertaken on an institutional landscape that was less than ideal. There was confusion stemming from lack of policy direction or guidance from central government regarding such matters as: prioritisation of outcomes; tensions between contiguous local authorities when deciding if it was appropriate to collaborate; and concerns that councils were being, yet again, forced to undertake an unfunded mandate when the outcomes belonged to the community, and not to the council. Central government departmental input was left largely to individual departments and officers. There was also relatively limited guidance available to local authorities from central government to facilitate first generation outcomes processes, apart from the *KnowHow Guides*.

Based on the study findings, we recommend that the LGA be clarified to provide better guidance in three respects.

- The constraints on the effectiveness of first generation community outcome processes stemmed from the provisions in the LGA relating to community outcome processes and how these provisions have been interpreted and implemented by local and central government. Although the Act manifestly mandates local authorities to facilitate deliberative community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance, and expects central government departments to contribute to this process, the procedural requirements relating to the role of local authorities are limited in scope. Local authorities have discretion to facilitate a process appropriate to their particular circumstances and central government provided only limited guidance to assist local authorities in this respect for first generation LTCCPs. While flexibility in designing community outcomes processes may be desirable, a lack of adequate understanding of the community outcomes process as a pivotal part of the community governance mandate of the Act has limited its potential as a forum for community governance. Inadequate procedural guidance is also reflected in outcome statements, which are framed as generic, high level aspirations and thus not very useful in providing guidance for collective decision-making and action. A good practice web site akin to MfE's *Quality Planning* website could be a useful resource for practitioners.
- A notable omission in the strategic planning logic model in the LGA is local authority outcomes. Local authority outcomes are conceptually parallel to central government departmental outcomes, and both contribute to community outcomes. This is not always evident in the framing of LTCCPs. It is necessary to make this relationship clearer in the Act to avoid misunderstanding.
- Related to the above, it is also not yet clear how the outcomes-focussed (as opposed to the outputs-focussed) strategic planning regime recently introduced for the State sector (central government departments) based on the *Public Finance Act* (2004) and the *Crown Entities*

Act (2004) will interface with the local government community outcomes-focussed strategic planning regime in the LGA. The way the relationship evolves between these two parallel planning regimes will have implications for the role of central government departments in community outcomes processes and the extent to which central government departments will collaborate with local government to respond to community outcomes within a ‘whole-of-government’ planning paradigm. These concerns reflect the constitutional constraints on the relationship between central and local government and need clarification.

Other issues exposed by our research that require Government attention and action are as follows:

- A process of deliberative engagement needs to be an informed one and participants need to have an adequate understanding of the contextual setting for the community outcomes process. This includes an understanding of the purpose of the process, the role of participants, and an informed appreciation of substantive issues in the community.
- In the local government setting, it is important that elected members and senior management staff understand the community governance mandate enshrined in the LGA. The spirit and purpose of community governance needs to be embraced rather than be seen as a one off function of local government and possibly a threat to previously familiar roles. In the local government sector, old ways are hard to break and the required institutional and cultural change will not occur overnight. These informal or ‘soft’ institutional constraints and barriers need to be addressed. The role of council in the community outcomes process is one of working in collaboration with other stakeholders to facilitate deliberative community engagement. As part of the community they represent, they can contribute by providing feedback on draft and final outcomes.
- It was essentially left to individual central government departments to decide their level of participation and central government agencies took part in the process primarily at the regional level. A few central government agencies enthusiastically responded to the opportunity to become participants in community outcomes process and others did not see themselves having a role because they saw it as a local authority responsibility and took part only if they were invited. This issue needs to be addressed by the State Services Commission.
- The lead agency to facilitate central government participation in outcome processes, the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), had limited capability for doing so and was seen as having relatively low status within the ranks of government departments. The department was not well prepared to undertake this role in time for the first generation outcomes processes. In fact, in the local government arena, some saw the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) as the lead government agency rather than DIA, such was the MSD’s level of activity. There were commonly held views that DIA needed to demonstrate stronger leadership and enhance capability for carrying out its role. This issue needs to be addressed and DIA needs to be adequately resourced.
- The LGA provides for the outcomes process to be facilitated by local authorities, but be “owned” by the community. This provision created tension in the minds of some participants in outcome processes. A range of community organisations and individuals took part to varying degrees in community outcomes processes, but the majority of participants were those who were familiar with, and had at some time participated in, council consultation processes. Several organisations that were actively involved had picked up the cues at the beginning of the process and considered that they needed to stay involved in the whole process. Cost, time, and capacity were all issues for community

organisations and individuals, and made it difficult to stay involved in the process throughout. Lack of knowledge and understanding was also a concern for community participants. Some community groups felt left out with individual cases of submissions not being heard, of understanding that feedback would be given and nothing being received, and that council behaved as if it was their process rather than community owned. Such concerns emphasise the importance of designing and resourcing engagement processes, which are socially inclusive and include a wider community. The engagement methods only partially drew a wider community into deliberations. Larger councils may wish to experiment with citizens' juries and deliberative polling.

- The above point also highlights the particular struggle for local Māori to partake in outcomes processes when they are expected to participate in other central and local government consultations as well. One case study area initiated a separate Māori community outcomes process, but this was an exception. While there were some positive comments from Māori respondents in our study, it was clear that the process did not allow for Māori cultural values to be fully expressed. There was a common concern that many councils did not have a strong relationship with their Māori or iwi communities. This concern needs to be addressed.
- The business sector was notably absent from first generation community outcomes processes. This is a significant omission in view of the role of the business sector in generating employment and income opportunities within regions and localities and thereby contributing to economic well-being.

The implications of the LGA mandate for community outcome processes need to be understood better by all stakeholders and not rest with government agencies alone. It is through the citizenry that the aspirations and needs of diverse communities can be understood in the social and political context and we see this as the challenge for harnessing the potential of community governance. A sustainable development approach to achieve community well-being needs the voices of all sectors of society to be engaged in open dialogue. This can potentially have longer term benefits for communities from a sustainability perspective and also raise awareness within local and central government agencies that they really do need to do better in recognising diversity and being socially inclusive.

Introduction:

Community Outcomes and Community Governance

1.1 Introduction

Provisions in the 2002 *Local Government Act* (LGA) for community outcomes and community outcome processes are indicative of an expressed desire by the New Zealand legislature to empower communities as partners in the governance process. The rationale is to enable communities to steer policy-making in the local and central government sectors, within a ‘whole-of-government’ setting, through deliberative public engagement. Hitherto, citizens have been constitutionally empowered to play this role primarily through decision-making processes based on institutional arrangements for electoral democracy in central and local government spheres. The LGA (2002) has extended the role of citizens in decision-making via participatory democracy with a devolved and cooperative mandate. The LGA (2002) can thus be seen to lay institutional foundations for community governance. A challenge for local authorities and central government agencies is how to integrate these two forms of democratic accountabilities – electoral and participatory - as a means to “deepen” democracy in New Zealand.

This report is part of a wider research project aimed at evaluating the quality of planning and governance under the LGA (see Preface, Figure 0.1). This part of the project focuses on the *community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance*. A companion report focuses on *choosing community-based indicators to monitor and report on progress towards achieving community outcomes* (PUCM LGA Report 4, Johnston and Memon, 2008).

In this opening Section 1 of the report, key concepts for community outcomes and governance are defined, followed by the research approach used in this study. The section ends by explaining how the overall report is organised.

1.2 Key Concepts

Current interest in the potential of the concepts of well-being, community well-being indicators, ‘joined-up government’¹ and managing for outcomes as means for improving public policy-making and planning effectiveness in New Zealand, and other Western societies, can be traced to long-standing philosophical debates about the nature of the ‘good life’, the ‘good society’, ‘happiness’, and ‘progress’ and, more recently, to debates about the concepts such as development, sustainable development, and healthy cities (Sen, 1992; Duncan, 2005; Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007).

¹ Also referred to in the literature by some as holistic governance or ‘whole-of-government’ (Perri 6, et al., 2002).

This trend, part of a world-wide social movement, reflects growing societal concern with well-being from a holistic and democratic perspective and a growing consensus on the need to develop more encompassing measures of progress and well-being that extend beyond conventional economic indices, such as gross domestic product (GDP), and that reflect values and aspirations of diverse communities (Waring, 1990; Meadows, 1998; Salvaris, 2000). Related societal concerns shaping this trend include public alienation from political processes and a decline in social trust. Thus, many societies are striving to improve the way they define and measure progress and plan for change from integrated, participatory and sustainable development perspectives.

In parliamentary democracies, local government is arguably the level of democracy closest to the community, with a mandate to promote well-being of its communities. The role of local government in western societies has changed in significant respects since the 1990s in response to wide-ranging trends including globalisation and economic competition, progressive erosion of the role of central state, international migration and increasing social diversity. Such trends are expected to continue during the foreseeable future. In order to meet these challenges, today's local governments have more need than ever before to understand and engage their communities in collaboration with central government and to play a more direct role in their well-being, potentially as a foundation towards new models of community governance (Stoker and Wilson, 2004; Sullivan, 2004). The concept of *community governance* is defined as “a normative prescription for the future governing of localities in which there is much closer and deeper connection between the traditional governing instrument- the local authority- and key local stakeholders, including the public(s)” (Sullivan, 2004:182). As a reflection of this shift from *government* to *governance*, public decision-making is increasingly becoming an interactive process involving multiple actors from the government, the business sector and civil society (Cavaye, 2004; Lovan, 2004). Related concepts of *holistic governance* or ‘whole-of-government’ also emphasise the need to focus on delivering integrated policies and practices within the public sector to contribute to desirable outcomes to meet needs of diverse communities (Perri 6, et al; 2002).

1.3 Community Outcomes-Focused Planning

Central to the challenge of community governance is articulation of community goals and objectives as outcomes that communities value to promote well-being and as a means to inform strategic planning within local and central government sectors. It is imperative that community engagement reflects the values of diverse communities within a local authority's geographical jurisdiction and is based on an informed understanding by communities of the contextual issues. New Zealand is one of the few western countries where the requirement to develop community outcomes and community indicators to report progress towards community outcomes at the local and regional level within a ‘whole-of-government’ strategic planning policy framework has been enacted into law. The LGA (2002) requires every local authority to facilitate development of community outcomes and to monitor, and not less than once every 3 years, report on the progress made by the community in achieving the community outcomes for the district or region. Related to this, the Act also requires local authorities to prepare a strategic plan or Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). A LTCCP articulates a local authority strategy, informed by both community desires and the reality of a community's circumstances, and provides an integrated view of the policies and actions required to support the strategy. The outcome-focussed local government strategic planning regime mandated under the LGA is conceptually, in some respects, a mirror image of the outcome/objective-focussed State sector

strategic planning regime based on the *Public Finance Act* (2004) and the *Crown Entities Act* (2004)².

Planning and managing for outcomes requires a strategic focus on the medium-term. From a corporate planning perspective, outcome-focused planning is an iterative and interactive decision-making process based on the rational planning model that clarifies the outcomes an agency is seeking to achieve, and identifies the best means to achieve them. It is argued that when organisations are planning and managing for outcomes, they:

- have a good understanding of the environment that they operate in;
- have a clear vision of why they exist, what they want to achieve, and how well they are achieving against this plan while keeping in mind a clear set of objectives, activities, outputs, outcomes and measures of success;
- deliver what they have planned - meeting standards of timeliness, quality, accuracy and in a manner consistent with public sector ethics and values;
- take stock of progress by monitoring, measuring, reviewing and evaluating as they go;
- learn from success and failure, and modify what they do and how they do it;
- report publicly on results, promoting transparency and providing a basis for dialogue about future decisions; and
- have an adaptive and innovative culture and seek continuous improvement (State Services Commission, 2007).

The focus of this research report is on community outcome processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs as a forum for community governance in the context of the 'whole-of-government' strategic planning framework embedded in the LGA³. It is recognised that undertaking these obligations effectively is an evolving learning process for all. Developing community outcomes for a local authority spatial jurisdiction and designing associated monitoring and reporting protocols in consultation with central government and other stakeholders takes time and needs adequate capacity (i.e., money, skills, technical guides, etc.) and commitment (i.e., willingness to comply with the mandate and to provide resources for its satisfactory implementation). Community engagement is by no means a new task for the New Zealand local government sector. Over the last three decades, local authorities have accumulated a great deal of practical consultation experience in the context of the *Local Government Act* (1974) and the *Resource Management Act* (1991) and a few councils have undertaken innovative *Agenda 21* initiatives modelled on community well-being, quality of life and sustainable development paradigms.

This previous experience provides a platform to build on for purposes of planning under the new LGA. As argued in this study, it is nevertheless important for all participants to understand the significance of the new participatory governance paradigm within which local authorities are expected to facilitate community engagement for developing community outcomes. The new LGA is a legislative instrument for community governance, rather than local government as before. The concept of community governance encapsulates the purpose of local government as stated in the Act⁴. Viewing the Act from this stance, Parliament requires local authorities to accord much greater weight to engaging with communities for guiding strategic planning and

² The relevant provisions of the three Acts are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

³ For the purpose of this study, the terms community governance and local governance are used synonymously as a form of participant democracy.

⁴ As stated in section 10 of the LGA, the purpose of local government is: (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.

decision-making in a deliberative manner than manifestly has been the case hitherto in the history of New Zealand local government. As already noted, community outcomes are assigned a pivotal role in the LGA strategic planning regime. Central government is expected to collaborate with local government to respond to community outcomes. Local authorities should facilitate community outcomes processes that recognise this shift in emphasis from *local government* to *community governance*. Failure to sufficiently appreciate this may mean risking business-as-usual in the way local government functions and in its relationship with central government, other stakeholders, Māori and the wider civic society.

1.4 Study Approach and Report Organisation

The research objective for this part of PUCM Phase 4 on planning and governance under the LGA is to develop a methodology for evaluating the LGA community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance and related monitoring and reporting frameworks, and applying it to selected councils (see Figure 0.1 in Preface). The research question addressed in this report is therefore: *how effective have community outcome processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs been as a forum for community governance in the context of the strategic planning paradigm embedded in the LGA?*

1.4.1 Research approach

To answer the research question, a multi-pronged, multi-scalar analytical approach was used incorporating reviews of academic literature, analysis of public documents, and empirical case studies. The research approach is mapped out in Figure 1.1.

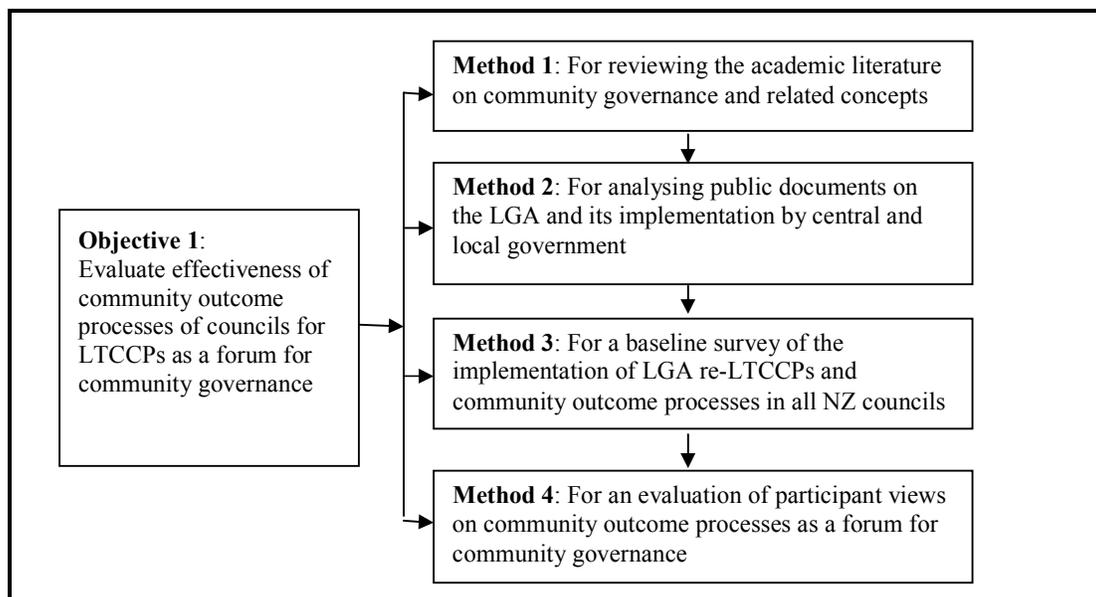


Figure 1.1: Research design for objective 1 of the research project on planning and governance under the LGA aimed at answering the question: how effective have community outcome processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs been as a forum for community governance?

The approach draws on the institutional analysis research paradigm in recent policy and planning literatures. There has been a recent rapid rise in interest in institutional arrangements underpinning various aspects of our lives in economic, political and social spheres. The term ‘institutional arrangements’ is used broadly, inclusive of the formal organisations of government and informal ways (rules, mores, practices), or indeed, the lack of them, that provide incentives and disincentives for actors to behave in particular ways. The core of the institutionalist perspective is the insight that formal organisational arrangements on their own do not provide an adequate explanation of decision-making dynamics and outcomes because informal organisational forms are equally significant (Rydin and Falleth 2006). All kinds of external influences affect the way in which individuals form their own decision-making processes (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). Thus, it is how both the formal institutions (hard infrastructure) and informal institutions (soft infrastructure) shape the patterns of social interactions, which produce social phenomena and the ways in which those institutions emerge from such interactions that is of increasing concern.

The formal and informal networks between actors help explain how governance processes work. The institutional capacities at the macro and micro level are set within time-place relations, which are complex and ever changing. The shifting social context means that transformation processes are not static and too much emphasis on particular habitual regulatory knowledge can stifle participants, whereas being open to others’ views and to be able to deliberate in network arrangements will allow trust in community governance to develop (Healey, et al., 2002; Kothari, 2001).

1.4.2 Report organisation

Introduction and Conclusion sections aside, the report is organised in two parts. Part A contains a review and examination of academic and public documents (sections 2-4) that informed development of methodology for the empirical case studies in Part B aimed at councils’ implementation of the LGA and the views of participants on the quality of community outcome processes.

Part A provides an interrogation of the institutional framework for community outcome processes in the context of the community governance mandate of the LGA from theoretical, constitutional, and legislative perspectives. The community governance mandate in the LGA and related policy underpinnings of the Act pertinent to community engagement⁵ were analysed from a theoretical perspective by drawing on recent wide-ranging social science policy and planning literatures on governance, well-being, sustainable development, community engagement and design principles for facilitating community engagement. The findings from this analysis are presented in Sections 2 and 3 of this report.

Next, the provisions in the LGA relating to: the purpose of identification of community outcomes; the process for identifying community outcomes; and the obligations to report against community outcomes, were documented in the wider context of the strategic planning, decision-making and accountability provisions contained in Part 6 of the Act. This step in the research also included a brief overview of the parallel provisions in the *Public Finance Act* (2004) for strategic planning as part of the current *Managing for Outcomes/Objectives* initiative in the State sector as a comparison. The findings of this analysis are reported in Section 4 of the report.

⁵ Community outcome processes are an exercise in community engagement.

The analyses and discussions in Part A of the report informed development of the methodology for the empirical studies reported in Part B of the report, first with respect to the baseline survey of councils and their LGA implementation efforts (Section 5), but more especially with regard to the quality of community outcome processes as perceived by participants in first generation community outcome processes (Sections 6 and 7).

The baseline survey was designed to gain an overview of how the process of preparing first generation LTCCPs was beginning to unfold in regions and districts from the perspective of local authorities with particular reference to facilitating community outcome processes and to identify any issues of concern around the time the Act was to be implemented. The baseline survey included the following themes: central government policy guidance to councils on the LTCCP process; council capability (commitment and capacity) for preparing the 2006 LTCCPs; council strategy for developing a process for identifying community outcomes; role of central government departments and agencies in community outcome processes; role of non-Māori organisations and groups in identifying community outcomes; and role of Māori in governance and identifying community outcomes. All 86 local authorities (councils) were surveyed by either face-to-face interviews or a mailed questionnaire. Only a summary of the approach and findings is provided in Section 5 of this report, because details were published over 2 years ago as PUCM LGA Report 2 (Borrie and Memon, 2005).

A major focus for the empirical studies in this report was, however, on developing a method of use in evaluating the quality of community outcomes processes from the perspective of not only council personnel, but also more particularly other participants in the first generation of community outcome processes in 10 case-study local authorities. The method includes six criteria that were derived from the conceptual underpinnings of the LGA and its provisions. The criteria are: inclusiveness of community groups; role of council as facilitator; integrating electoral and participatory democracy; cognitive and social learning; sustainable development principles; and promoting local governance and community well-being. The method for judging the quality of community outcome processes is presented in Section 6. In-depth interviews with participants in the community outcomes processes were conducted in the 10 case-study councils, and the findings relating to their perspectives on these six facets of community outcome processes are reported in Section 7.

A discussion of our main findings from the research on the quality of community outcome processes is presented in Section 9, along with recommendations and conclusions.

1.4.3 Links to Subsequent Reports

As noted, objective one of the PUCM Phase 4 on *Planning and Governance Under the LGA* focuses on developing a methodology for evaluating the LGA community outcomes processes (this report) and related monitoring and reporting frameworks and applying it to selected councils (Johnston and Memon, PUCM LGA Report 4, 2008). The subsequent two stages in the Phase 4 project will focus on methods to evaluate uptake of community outcomes by central and local government agencies and methods to evaluate progress made by communities towards achieving community outcomes for their districts or regions, respectively. Note that the analysis of the broader context in Part A of this report also sets the scene for purposes of developing methods to evaluate uptake of community outcomes by local and central government, and to evaluate progress towards achievement of outcomes, respectively, which form the subject of future reports (PUCM LGA Reports 5 and 6; see Figure 0.1 in Preface).

PART A

The Broader Institutional Context:

***The institutional framework for community outcome processes
and community governance mandate from theoretical,
constitutional and legislative perspectives.***

LGA as Mandate for Community Governance?⁶

“There are no sure-fire techniques for guaranteeing equal representation for all, or for eliciting ... [their] wishes... [All of us] at one time or another feel cut off from the power to influence the directions and pace of change. Writing them into the system, making them a part of the guidance machinery of the society, is the most critical political task of the coming generation.” (Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock*, 1970: 432).

2.1 Introduction

Since the 1970s, and increasingly since the 1980s, new ways of democracy have been advocated to ‘deepen’ or ‘thicken’ electoral or representative democracy practiced in Western societies (Giddens, 1999; Drage, 2002; Marinetto, 2003; Larner and Walters, 2004). Many of the critical societal issues and conflicts are deemed wicked⁷ in the context of the sustainable development discourse and for this reason difficult to address. Traditional public sector institutions based on electoral representation lack adequate capacity to address these issues and conflicts. Innovative institutional arrangements for community governance based on wide-ranging deliberative civic engagement, holistic or integrated government, and central and local government collaboration with private and voluntary sectors in policy making, planning, and service delivery, potentially offer hope.

Our objective in this Section is to critically examine the potential of the new LGA as a devolved and cooperative mandate for community governance from the above perspective. Recent local government reforms in New Zealand broadly reflect the direction of local government reform initiatives in other liberal Western democracies. The reforms undertaken in the Anglophonic countries during the 1980s to modernise local government were mainly informed by neo-liberal political agendas, whereas the more recent reforms encompass a wider array of policy objectives including democratic renewal, fostering strategic partnerships and improved service delivery. The shift from local government to *community governance*, embodied in the ideology of the Third Way, has been identified as a fundamental feature of the recent reforms. Governance eschews the rigid divide between the state and the market in favour of a repertoire of alliances, networks and partnerships. Governance at the local level is seen by some as a solution to the erosion of the efficacy of central government and representative democracy. Thus, recent local government reforms in New Zealand, the UK and elsewhere pose important research questions concerning their potential to enhance capacity and commitment of central and local government and communities to promote well-being in a collaborative manner. In a review of recent UK research, Geddes observes that these centrally driven initiatives mostly limit, rather than enhance local autonomy, contribute to

⁶ This Section of the report is based on Thomas and Memon, 2007.

⁷ Wicked problems are cross-cutting and relentless, with no permanent solutions.

consultation fatigue, and seem to undermine rather than buttress, mainstream electoral democratic processes.

2.2 Community Governance

Theorists suggest that community governance occurs when the prime responsibility of the well-being of communities is secured by means of working in partnerships with others through communication strategies that offer a collective choice (Sullivan, 2002). Community governance assists in “enabling communities to resolve their problems and meet their needs in the most effective way” (Stewart and Stoker, 1995: 204). Well-being typically includes social, economic, and environmental aspects of community development.

Community governance is, however, a contested concept. Sullivan (2002:197) warns there is a danger of interpreting community governance narrowly so that it is “understood as one of a number of functions of local government rather than as a philosophy for governing localities”. This concern is reflected in our study, as demonstrated in the analysis of community outcome processes. Notably, participants betrayed a limited appreciation of the significance of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance and as a pivotal part of the local government, and to a lesser extent, central government strategic planning frameworks.

2.2.1 Shift from local government to community governance

In contrast to the earlier New Zealand local government reforms undertaken in 1989 and 1996, shaped primarily by neo-liberal policy discourses of enhanced efficiency and transparency of decision-making, the LGA is representative of a programme of re-engineering the social contract by a social democratic coalition government. As argued below, however, no one theory or explanation of governance is suitable on its own to describe the various influences underpinning the LGA, or to interpret its key provisions and its impact on the practices of local authorities. The LGA reflects an ongoing dialectic between democracy and efficiency. The Act betrays a tension in the minds of New Zealand’s national leaders to give elected local authorities flexibility to respond to ‘diverse’ local communities, but also in a manner that is compliant with rational planning, evaluation and decision-making processes, and centralized auditing requirements laid down by central government, in order to ensure fiscal prudence.

The dominant ideas that have shaped the local government policy agenda since the late 1990s are a departure from the right wing rational actor models based upon economic efficiency that dominated the 1989 and 1996 reforms. Instead, collaboration between central and local government and communities, characterised in the discourse as a shift from government to governance, took precedence for two related reasons. First, was the issue of civic culture. Reaction against the right wing political economy of the 1980s and early 1990s opened a policy window, which allowed concepts of Third Way social democracy to come to the fore. The focus shifted to finding ways to bring a social element back into the management of the economy, which called for a reinvigoration of civic culture. Second, there was the issue of community. Questions of sustaining community engagement and how to serve multiple communities by local and central government and other service providers became relevant.

In contrast to communitarianism, a contesting influence shaping the LGA was a view that government should be managed on sound business principles. The practices originating from public choice theory, known as “New Public Management” (NPM), to avoid ‘local government failure’ were dominant in New Zealand during the period of neo-liberal state restructuring which

preceded the LGA 2002 (Dollery and Wallis, 2001). During the late 1990s and thereafter, the New Zealand Business Roundtable and the Local Government Forum, representing the business sector and allied organisations, such as Federated Farmers, continued to be strong advocates of limiting local government functions and its discretionary decision-making powers, in order to promote greater efficiency and to keep local body rates low (NZ Business Roundtable, 1999; NZ Business Roundtable, 2002).

Thus, the presence of communitarianism and NPM discourses in the post-1999 reform agenda explain a tension between participatory democracy and rational planning objectives embedded in the provisions of the LGA (2002). Communitarianism is seen in the language of citizen empowerment, community consultation and community well-being employed in the Act. On the other hand, NPM is seen in the highly prescriptive planning and financial accountability requirements placed upon local authorities by the Act.

2.2.2 The rise of the “Third Way”

As already inferred, the new LGA provides a model for collaboration between central and local government and communities embodied in the ideology of the “Third Way”, a political programme aimed at renewing social democracy by including civil society as a partner in managing the economy. This influence is rooted in a deep-seated interest in the role that civil society can play in assisting central government. The philosophical argument underpinning the Third Way is that society’s connectedness has been weakened by market economies of the Right and government bureaucracies of the Left. The Third Way ‘...seeks to transcend both old-style social democracy (pure socialism) and neo-liberalism (pure capitalism) and aims to find middle ground between the far right and the far left.’ Goodwin (1998) describes it as ‘... a route which side-steps old battle lines between state and market in favour of marrying together a market-led economy with a redistributive social policy.’ The Third Way provides a framework for policy making that seeks to adapt social democracy to a world that has changed fundamentally over the past two or three decades. In Giddens’s view (1999) ‘A deepening democracy is required because the old mechanisms of government don’t work in a society where citizens live in the same information environment as those in power over them’ The political agenda of Third Way governments is to renew civil society by involving public participation in the policy process within a ‘whole of government’ setting (Giddens, 1998; Latham, 2001).

The Third Way guided various centre-left governments among a number of Western liberal democracies, including the United States, Britain, Germany and New Zealand towards the end of the last decade (Giddens 2001). The New Left critique of the hierarchical, top-down bureaucratic model of social democracy was accompanied by the rise of participatory democracy. Third Way leaders sought to address the breakdown of the social contract through the revitalisation of community, to balance the authority of the central government, so that a measure of democratic accountability might be returned to the local level. Naturally, local government was a logical tool to form a partnership with local communities, and thereby empower them. In order to make policy-making more joined-up and strategic, services had to be reoriented to meet the needs of citizens, not the convenience of service providers. Delivery of solutions to cross-cutting community issues such as community safety, sustainable development, and social inclusion (dealing with poverty, unemployment or a low skilled workforce) were to be coordinated, with the state engaging with the local level to deliver solutions to economic and social problems. Thus, there was synergy between the turn to governance and the agenda of the Third Way. Influenced by the agenda of the Third Way, it is the LGA’s features of powers of general competence, participatory democracy, and strategic planning within a ‘whole-of-

government' sustainable development context that distinguish it from its predecessor – the LGA, 1974.

Robert Putnam's 1993 case study of civic tradition in Italy popularised the idea of social capital, because Putnam showed that good local governance contributed to well-performing economies and communities. Former Prime Minister Jim Bolger first introduced the concept into New Zealand politics in 1997 (Richardson, 1998). The recent British local government reforms, based on the Third Way, might also be considered a significant influence on the communitarian vision that found its way into the LGA in New Zealand (Tizzard, 1998; DIA, 2000; DIA, undated). During the 1997 election campaign in Britain, New Labour, under Tony Blair, promised a departure from the party's traditional socialist approach to government using the template for the renewal of democracy and society advocated by Giddens. New Labour mapped out a strategy to modernise local government, which apparently sought to strengthen political leadership structures, enlarge community participation in local government decision-making and instil greater efficiencies in service delivery.

2.2.3 The rediscovery of the local level

If the drive for competitiveness and contestability was the dominant policy paradigm in New Zealand during the 1980s and the 1990s, informed by the school of thought originating from theories of public choice, the theoretical terrain shifted again in the 1990s where interest in the utility of public governance led to a rediscovery of the local level (DIA, 2000).

In general, this trend can be explained by increasing demands from citizens for services in the latter part of the 1990s after rolling back of the state, fiscal austerity of the 1980s, and disillusionment with politics at the central government level (Drage, 1999). Furthermore, the popularity of the principle of subsidiarity was growing, which dictated that activities should generally be undertaken by the lowest level of government qualified to do so. The New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Policy recognised subsidiarity in 1987, and it became highly popularised in governance circles when it was enshrined as a principle in the Treaty of Maastricht that established the European Union. It was theorised that "localness" was a useful quality for delivering public goods and services to New Zealand's "diverse" communities, to satisfy citizen voice as well as choice (DIA, 2000)⁸.

Participatory democracy also became more popular because of the decision to replace the First Past the Post electoral system with a Mixed Member Proportional system, with calls to introduce a proportional system at the local level as well to promote greater political accountability (Bush, 1999). Closely related to participation was an increasing interest in citizenship, and the role of local government in delivering democratic rights at the local level (Hayward, 1997; Cheyne, 1999; Cousins, 1999). Citizenship challenges the conception of government as a provider of discrete services, and elevates the role of local communities as a site for political activity and as a mechanism to give vision to the concerns of communities, in a world where national sovereignty has been eroded by forces of globalisation and regionalisation. It was argued local government gave citizens a public space to gather, cultivate solidarity and contribute to the life of their community.

In other words, the local level gained greater salience as notions of representation were questioned. The power of the welfare state, before the egalitarian ethic was dispensed with in the 1980s, was that national policies could be developed and programmes applied consistently

⁸ The principle of subsidiarity was also the basis on which devolution of resource management functions was justified in the *Resource Management Act* enacted earlier in 1991 (Ericksen, Berke, Crawford and Dixon, 2003).

throughout the country, as the degree of plurality was not as great. At the close of the millennium there was a general acknowledgement that due to the new degree of “diversity” in New Zealand society, a “one-size-fits-all” national approach to public policy was no longer desirable or appropriate unless perhaps national policy relates to matters of national importance as specified in the *Resource Management Act*, for example. There were also murmurings that the constitutional position of local government should be recognised as a sphere of government accountable to the local level, which could act as a check on the power of the centre in a unitary state with an unwritten constitution

2.3 Discussion and Conclusion

How is the “turn to governance” in New Zealand local government explained? Clearly, there were several endogenous and exogenous pressures from central government and the local government sectors, in the wider context of influences emanating from economic globalisation and the trend to adopt participatory models of democracy in Western liberal democracies. These combined to give a stronger role to local government in the late 1990s.

There was increasing recognition that the standardised approach to the design and delivery of social services was no longer appropriate. Communities, whether defined in geographic, ethnic, age or other terms were increasingly fragmented and diverse (Le Heron and Pawson, 1996; McKinlay, 1999a). During the last two decades of the twentieth century, the role of central government had been hollowed out, focussed on the creation of an efficient legal and regulatory framework, the provision of core national public goods, such as defence, law and order and income distribution (McKinlay, 1999b; Dollery and Wallis, 2001). The centralisation of local government activities included withdrawal from provincial New Zealand of much of former central government representation. This was accompanied by a growing recognition that outcomes the government itself wished to achieve could not simply be mandates from Wellington, but required the ability to work closely with local networks and organisations (McKinlay, 1999b). Local authorities were drawn into an advocacy role in areas such as health services as citizens turned to them as the only entity with a democratic mandate capable of speaking on their behalf to central government. There were a number of instances where local authorities felt obliged to take on new responsibilities, such as promoting economic development as a consequence of central government withdrawal (McKinlay, 1998). The accumulated impact of changes in the reporting and accountability requirements in the local government sector helped to raise awareness within the local authority and community sectors of the longer term investment implications for infrastructural sustainability and resources required to fund this.

The core role of local government came to be seen not in terms of service delivery, but making decisions about the nature of services, how they might best be provided, and in setting standards and regulating activity, acting as government of the locality (McKinlay, 1999b). Local government came to be seen as a vehicle for political interactions that enabled plural societies to work together, articulate and work towards common goals and exercise their rights as citizens (Forgie, Cheyne and McDermott, 1999; Reid, 2002). Local government was also seen as important to build civic culture and trust, and so enhance democracy in New Zealand. The Labour coalition elected in 1999 acted to address poorer than expected growth and concerns about the loss of social cohesion, and less confidence in the market to achieve sustainable outcomes. In reaction to the shortcomings of models such as NPM (New Public Management), there was a perceived need for the state to be involved in solutions in a fashion that was concerned with “outcomes” focussed on improving community well-being as opposed to

“outputs” (Richardson, 2004). The general overhaul of the public sector and the response of Third Way social democracy to the effects of globalisation and the extremity of the neo-liberal reforms created the moment for a communitarian vision to enter the lexicon of local government reform. The turn to governance gained currency in the late 1990s, as a response to globalisation, economic de-regulation, supply side economics and the drive for competitiveness (Pierre, 2000).

Arguably, the new statute potentially creates spaces for actors outside of the mainstream of public policy institutions to participate. The introduction of the new purpose for local government, the community engagement and strategic planning, decision-making and accountability provisions, and general empowerment provisions reduce obstacles in the agenda setting process and remove excuses for keeping issues off the local policy agenda, because mechanisms are provided to make it easier for communities to identify issues and have them recognised. With 86 territorial authorities engaged with their communities in this manner, there are potentially more opportunities for policy windows to open. Thus, the LGA 2002 has given the sector more autonomy from central government and local authorities have the opportunity to be more active players with regard to all kinds of local policy issues.

However, one important question remains. Even though central government spurred a revival of civic culture at the local level, a key policy issue not fully resolved by the 2002 Act is the adequacy of institutional arrangements to allow effective community governance. Community governance begins with recognition that local and central government (as well as other sectors) have complementary roles – spheres of government maintaining their independence as equal partners, but working collaboratively with communities to promote socio-economic and environmental community well-being. One may question the robustness of provisions for community governance in the 2002 Act as a platform to develop and sustain such inter-relationships:

The fundamental question about its relationship with central government is whether local government is to be autonomous, or central government’s agent. While it would prefer the former, with very clear local accountability, this means it would need to look beyond the narrow funding base of rates; some central funding would imply more resources, but greater control and mixed accountability (Palmer, 1999).

Under the new enabling framework, local government looks to the LGA to give it leverage to influence the priorities of central government, by establishing links in planning service delivery with central government agencies and departments. But will local government have the capability (i.e., commitment and capacity) to exercise this role and will the centre be committed to this, including building capacity in its own implementing agencies? While it is far too early to judge, early implementation experience indicates these are legitimate questions (Reid et al., 2006), as does prior experience with the devolved and cooperative RMA mandate (Borrie, et al., 2004; Ericksen, et al., 2001; Ericksen, et al., 2003). The comment on recent British research findings noted at the beginning of this Section should also certainly be reason for posing these questions.

The presence of competing agendas and the visible tension between democracy and economic rationality shows that the 2002 Act is instrumental in nature as it is chiefly concerned with prescribing structures and processes, coupled with central audit provisions to ensure compliance. In many ways, the long-standing struggle between provincial and centrist tendencies in New Zealand persists. As has been demonstrated, the local government sector has been empowered by introducing a participatory model of democracy, but the constitutional position of local government has not been addressed and the legislative framework is nonetheless still

prescriptive. A power of general competence without adequate funding provisions does not amount to much. Undeniably, there was heightened interest in the efficacy of sub-national government by the Labour-coalition (Tizzard, 1998; NZ Labour Party, 1999; and DIA, 2000), but the rhetoric of partnership and consultation was not equivalent to a turn from government to governance. Instead, it was a case of pragmatic engagement by central government with the local level, allowing a policy window to be opened which led to substantial alteration of the statute. The post-1999 reforms have reduced the centrally defined limits on the functions and operations of local government and created space for participatory democracy and strategic planning informed by the sustainability discourse. But that is as far as the policy window opened (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995:115). In the absence of a formally recognised constitutional base, the status of local government as a creature of parliament has not altered. Its powers and purpose and the process by which it operates are still determined by the centre.

The LGA 2002 might best be characterised as bringing better management, accountability and clarity to the system of local government, rather than legislation that empowered local government with a mandate to act as a branch of government in its own right, as the recent rhetoric of partnership might have suggested was the case. The latest wave of reform can be summarised as an attempt to build civic culture, but in a strictly prescribed way, as determined by the recent Third Way Labour coalition governments. Local authorities do not have the status of self-governing entities in their relationship with central government. Hence, the LGA is a limited mandate for community governance.

Notwithstanding these reservations, the community governance mandate in the LGA has opened an opportunity for community engagement and intergovernmental collaboration in a manner that has not been witnessed before in New Zealand. The objective of the PUCM research on *Planning and Governance Under the LGA* is to examine to what extent the potential of the Act is being harnessed from this stance. As noted, this report will focus on examining the potential of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance, while the associated report focuses on monitoring and reporting responsibilities. The following two stages of the PUCM LGA research will focus on methods for examining how well community outcomes are integrated in local and central governmental planning processes and the degree to which local and central government contribute to community outcomes.

Conceptual Underpinnings of the LGA

3.1 Introduction

The analysis of the community governance mandate in the LGA in the previous Section reflected key debates in the recent participatory democracy literature on governance as a contested concept. In this Section, we will briefly review six further related concepts in the participatory democracy literature which also underpin the LGA and thus merit closer examination: well-being, community well-being, sustainable development, deliberative engagement, social learning, and designing institutional arrangements for community engagement.

3.2 Well-being

Well-being has recently emerged as a prominent theme in public policy, reflecting a post-NPM shift in focus from producing outputs to achieving outcomes. The concept of well-being is germane to the purpose of local government as construed in the LGA 2002.

However, it is not easy to define what constitutes well-being. The difficulties relate to how to conceptualise well-being, how to measure or assess well-being, and how to target well-being as the outcome in policy formulation (Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007).

In the framing of the LGA, the concept of well-being provides a conceptual bridge between sustainable development and community outcomes. This reflects a view that sustainable development will occur when the many dimensions of well-being are considered holistically, as any one is dependent on another. Such an integrated or holistic perspective is useful in public policy by emphasizing the importance of co-ordinating public policy across traditional sectoral divides. However, the comprehensive nature of the term well-being is problematic and the concept remains ill-defined and under-conceptualised (Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007). Some see it as a useful umbrella concept while others question its validity as a policy construct. Social diversity makes it very difficult to define human needs, wants and values (Duncan, 2005) and the role of governments in promoting well-being. Well-being is a relative notion that is socially and culturally constructed, and as a result takes on different meanings depending on the context (Helman, 2001- cited in Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007). In a similar vein, Cheyne, et al. (1997: 47), suggest that *“There never can be a universal definition of well-being, because people of different cultures, social backgrounds, or world-views will perceive their well-being differently”* (italics in original).

A useful way to conceptualise well-being is in the context of the theory of capability (Sen, 1992). Sen argues that we need a combination of subjective and objective descriptors for the dimensions of human well-being alongside a space for historical, cultural, and personal specifications (Alkire and Black, 1997- cited in Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007). Well-being is seen within a capabilities approach as the positive freedom to live a flourishing life. Lives are seen as combinations of functionings making up the state of the person through a set of beings and doings. Capabilities are then a range of attainable and valuable functionings including sets of skills and power. A pattern of consumption is a means to provide the ability to do or be a range of things, not the end in itself. The policy challenge is translation of potential capabilities into attained functionings (Alkire and Black, 1997).

The complexity of the definition of well-being is reflected in the relatively unsatisfactory measurement and evaluation tools in public policy. A common practice is to rely on indicators. Indicators can be used to assess performance of policy objectives. Whilst useful as an information communication and policy diagnostic tool, indicators can be criticised with regard to the difficulty they have in integrating the subjective dimensions of well-being. As pointed out by Fleuret and Atkinson (2007), even an indicator, such as perceived health, has to be viewed with caution as individuals appreciate their personal situation from the point of view of the context in which they find themselves. They suggest that well-being should not therefore be frozen into a particular state for measurement, but should be considered dynamic. If its evaluation is to be based on a group of quantifiable indicators, these need to be complemented by the study of the processes of social construction (Fleuret and Sechet, 2002 cited in Fleuret and Atkinson, 2007). The significance of institutional settings (e.g., the home, the workplace, managed public spaces) and institutional behaviours and practices of service delivery agencies in the production, or not, of well-being is important to understand. It is also suggested that indicators should be multi-scalar, ranging from the scale of the individual to that of the group and society.

3.3 Community Well-being

‘Community’, ‘community outcomes’, and ‘community well-being’ are critical concepts in the LGA strategic planning framework.

The term ‘community’ is not, however, defined in the Act. It is defined in the Local Government KnowHow Guide on *Decision Making* as:

a network of people and organisations linked together by common factors. This might refer to a network of people linked by place (i.e. a geographic community), common interest or identity (e.g. a hapū, a voluntary organisation or society), [or] an administrative community (e.g. a district) (DIA, et al., 2003:17).

‘Community outcomes’ are defined in Section 5 of the LGA as a set of desired states of affairs relevant to the current or future social, economic, cultural or environmental well-being of the community that the community has identified as priorities through community consultation facilitated by a local authority. Community outcomes are thus a means to community well-being.

Taking into account social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of people and communities, and the foreseeable needs of future generations, are defined in the LGA as the five

pillars of a sustainable development approach. Sustainable development is one of the principles local authorities are directed to act in accordance with (LGA, Section 14).

Use of the term 'community' and its derivatives 'community outcomes' and 'community well-being' in the Act as elements of the LTCCP planning framework reflect a common understanding of the relevance of the term community as a concept for planning in the wider planning and community development practice literatures. For example:

Community is an interlocking pattern of just human relationships in which people have at least a minimal sense of consensus within a definable territory. People within a community actively participate and cooperate with others to create their own self-worth, a sense of caring about others, and a feeling for the spirit of connectedness (Freie, 1998:23).

The long-standing idea that community has a spatial reference or identification, has continued in policy and planning practices. This notion is based on the view of community as homogeneous and usually connected with locality. The physical proximity, defined by locality and residence, is central to the conventional understanding of community. This ideal of 'Gemeinschaft' coined by Tonnies in 1886 (translated by Loomis, 1956) is a nostalgic myth according to many social commentators (Smith, 1980) and does not have the social cohesion which is often assumed. Talen (2000) considers that as an element of urban planning practice, the notion of 'community' is not well thought out. The quest for community in the realm of planning praxis provokes an age old debate, which given the current surge of interest in community, needs to be revisited and re-assessed. Talen (2000), like others, also argues that physical planning (urban design) cannot create a sense of community.

The 'community by association' or 'Gesellschaft' (Tonnies, 1886 translated by Loomis, 1956) suggests that society is more fragmented and that communities develop around shared interests rather than geographical location. The political community can be considered as being a mosaic of smaller collectivities that through mutual trust hold the wider community together "where the skills of self-government may be learned and practiced" (Marquand, 1988: 239 in Smith, 1996: 323). This community may be within territorial boundaries but often is not.

The community concept is also challenged by critics who favour a non-territorial approach due to the perceived weakening of family and neighbourhood ties in modern globalised society. Smith (1996) notes that mobility, technology, and division of labour have changed perceptions of space, and that society is no longer bounded by territories. Place or territory gives the impression of situatedness and fixity. However, changing mobility patterns mean people experience space in different ways and space is no longer seen as 'fixed'. With globalization and cross-cultural international migration, this fixity is in continual tension with mobility and movement. 'Places' are temporary fixes or nodes in the flow of ideas, goods, and people.

Nelson and Wright (1995:15) argue from a more critical political stance that "...community is a concept used by governments and other organisations, rather than the people themselves, and it carries connotations for consensus and "needs" determined with the parameters set by outsiders" and not by the people themselves. Some would argue that community has mythical status and that common definitions of community conceal power relations and biases in needs and interests within communities (Guijt and Shah, 1998 cited in Cooke and Kothari, 2001: 6).

From a similar stance, some consider that the 'community approach' advocated by governments is simply transferring state responsibilities to individuals and communities who, largely as volunteers, are asked to fill gaps in services left by the withdrawal or dis-engagement of the state

(Lamoureux, Mayer and Panet-Raymond, 1989). They see community as a praxis (custom or practice) rather than a theory.

In a similar vein, others see the move to accentuate community or create community as a form of social engineering (Thorns, 2002: 184). This view is reinforced by Whitehead (2003) who suggests that concepts such as neighbourhoods and communities are a social construction. These spatial or social entities can be taken over or exploited by pre-existing political and economic powers and scales of authority. So what was a space becomes a scale of social organizing and can be used by the state as the basis on which to supply services. Delineation or definition of an area can also make people interact, potentially building social capital. This form of 'social engineering' is not, however, always successful (Whitehead, 2003).

3.4 Sustainable Development

The paradigm of 'sustainable development' is prominent in framing the purpose and principles of local government in the LGA and in the design of the strategic planning framework. However, the meaning of sustainable development is not clearly defined in the Act or in related policy guidance documents and this is one of the major concerns that has been identified in the recent audit of first generation LTCCPs (Office of the Auditor General, 2007).

In the international arena, the paradigm of sustainable development has proved immensely powerful in shaping policy at multiple scales, ranging from global to local. However, it has proved to be a contested concept and opinions on the validity of sustainable development as a useful policy construct are divided in the social sciences and planning literatures. Some value the potential of the concept of "sustainability" and "sustainable development" as a source of moral and political regeneration and a new ethic for planning. They argue there is great value for democracy in public processes of debate about how sustainability should be operationalised, but this should not preclude striving for consensus on what we might mean by sustainability.

However, others, like Vallance, 2007, are critical. They consider that problems with definitions and the practice of sustainability have led to a burgeoning literature concerned with exposing the concept as inherently flawed. Since the Brundtland Report the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development have been criticised for containing a number of seemingly irreconcilable positions surrounding growth, development, the purpose of growth, means and ends. These divisions are often seen as occurring along economic growth versus economic development, strong versus weak sustainability, radical versus incremental change, ecological modernisation versus risk or along disciplinary lines, as economic, bio-physical environmental and social aspects are debated. Unreflective use of terms like sustainability and sustainable development often camouflage these points of contention. As Bruff and Wood (2000: 593, cited in Vallance, 2007) noted, while such terms have the potential to smooth over conflicts between environment and development and different political actors, unthinking promulgation means we risk 'replacing intellectual thought with moral conviction based around a slogan.'

Some of the key social science themes seen as pertinent to the challenge of promoting sustainability policy objectives relate to addressing difficult issues:

- of power and how it is distributed across gender, class, ethnicity and aboriginality;
- of marginality and disadvantage;
- of governance structures and institutional processes to effectively address sustainability goals;

- of empowerment, social and cognitive learning and collaboration as steps towards sustainability.

To sum up, notwithstanding the complexity and contradictions inherent in the policy paradigm of sustainable development, its usefulness to address ‘wicked’ societal issues should not be under-estimated. Pursued to its logical conclusion, the implementation of a sustainable development strategy entails comprehensive shifts in power relations and institutional alignments. In practice, sustainable development means making radical changes in attitudes, values, lifestyles, governance and policies. However, there is an historically-based inertia deeply entrenched in our value systems, and in our socio-economic and political formal and informal institutions. Local and central states have numerous other important goals which may contradict sustainability objectives and translating sustainable development into action has been slow. Approaches and policy initiatives taken vary widely and find various expressions. Nevertheless, small shifts in thinking and practices over a period of time have the potential to lead to dramatic shifts of institutions and decision-making processes. As argued by Emel and Peet (1989), every society exhibits a complex and shifting structure of values and it is important to recognise these values as the basis of the policy development process. From this perspective, the inclusion of the sustainable development paradigm in the LGA may be seen as the most recent manifestation of a long process of incremental shift in values in the wider New Zealand society which has been occurring over the last 150 years.

3.4.1 Rationale for a community focus on sustainable development

As discussed earlier in Section 2, an underlying intent of the LGA is to empower local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities in the present and for the future. Under the Labour coalition governments in power since 1999, local government has been seen by central government to take a leading role in promoting sustainable development. This reflects earlier experiences with *Agenda 21* type initiatives.

The above trend in New Zealand is similar to the situation in other Western states. In the wider international arena, local authorities are urged to work towards sustainability and are seen as having a key role (de Roo and Miller, 2000: 5). The justification for this is:

...because so many of the problems and solutions...have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling [Agenda 21's] objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social, and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and sub national environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development (United Nations Environmental Programme 2000, cited in Portney, 2003: 10).

Thus, for example, Willmott (2003) makes a strong case for national governments to recognise that sustainable development requires local government commitment and local community buy-in. Sustainability can only be achieved on the basis of just and peaceful communities. Sustainability is seen as being complex, with any solutions having costs and benefits which may vary spatially. At times, actions taken nationally to contribute to sustainability can be counterproductive from a local or regional perspective. Any approach must therefore be adapted to the unique context of local situations (de Roo and Miller, 2000: 5-11).

The justification for focusing on the ‘local’ or community level when seeking to operationalise sustainability is found in what has been termed “new localism” (Marvin and Guy, 1998 cited in Portney, 2003: 16). This paradigm gives primacy to local areas and local governments, as local people are more likely to respond to the physical environment they see and local governance will be more responsive to public environmental concerns. However this concept has been criticised as being flawed and unable to achieve sustainability, as local government has only a contributory role (Satterwaite, 1997 cited in Portney, 2003: 17). Arguably, central government in New Zealand has recently proved to be ambivalent in its own commitment to sustainable development objectives and may have found it politically convenient to expect that local government should take a lead role instead (Ericksen, et al., 2001 and 2003; and Johnston and Memon, 2008).

3.5 Deliberative Community Engagement

A turn towards participatory democracy in the LGA (2002) reflects a wider concern in advanced Western democracies with slow progress in addressing complex problems and a search for alternative forms of institutional arrangements for governance and planning. Liberal democracies have been criticised because they:

- are based on competitive elections, individual liberty and private property. This encourages short sighted policies, and favours those with vested interests.
- use methods for policy choices which address the symptoms rather than causes of wicked problems. Drawing on the heritage of the Enlightenment, liberal democracies tend to adopt instrumental analytical reasoning as a basis for policy development, desegregating problems and applying mechanisms of a free-market to government.

Thus, discourses on good governance and sustainable development in recent literatures have elements in common including empowerment, inter-generational and intra-generational equity, social cohesion, inclusiveness and participation (Goodland and Daly 1995). It is argued that sustainability requires an open, deliberative approach to decision making (Porter 2002). The characteristics of wicked problems, the realization that they pervade the contemporary policy landscape, and the poor match between such problems and the existing fragmented structure of public organisations employing top-down, coercive measures warrants the exploration of alternative community based governance approaches (Lysak and Weber 2007). As Giddens (1999) suggests, “[c]ivil society is the arena in which democratic attitudes, including tolerance, have to be developed. The civic sphere can be fostered by government, but is in its turn its cultural basis.” (Giddens, Reith Lecture 5, Democracy, 1999).

It is suggested that a new community governance institution needs to be grounded in robust and ongoing engagement and collaborative decision making (Lysak and Weber 2007). A number of authors have debated the merits of alternative socially inclusive and deliberative approaches to collective choice making, both in the context of urban planning as well as natural resource management (Dryzek, 1993; Healey, 1997; 1998; Sandercock, 1998; Forester, 1999; and Rydin and Falleth, 2006). For example, Dryzek (1993) focuses on the process of critical argument (logical reasoning) along the lines of an ideal speech situation in which people come together to talk under conditions of free and open discourse, and decisions are reached through the force of the better argument. It is suggested that the process of argumentation should be based on the Habermasian claims of comprehensibility, integrity, legitimacy and truth. Young (1990) advocates a model of communication which is sensitive to social differences and the way power

enters speech itself. She argues that ideal speech situations cannot achieve free debate because even if such situations eliminate the influences of economic power, social inequalities would still arise because ideal speech situations privilege some styles of speaking over others. She proposes a variety of methods of communication in addition to critical argument to both promote democratic deliberation and acknowledge community heterogeneity. In a similar vein, Lysak and Weber (2007) argue that collaborative natural resource management institutions must create a genuine stake in decision processes for all participants. They should successfully integrate information and policy preferences, and provide opportunities to discover shared values and forge trust among diverse, often adversarial interests.

3.5.1 Community engagement and the changing role of the state

The recent focus on community engagement represents part of an ongoing evolution in the role of the state, and the dominant approach taken to achieve the role of government in Western democracies (Figure 3.1) (Cavaye, 2004). Thus, the welfare state of the 1960s and 1970s, focused on the development of major social policy and infrastructure. The contractual state emerged in the 1980s, with a particular emphasis on the adoption of neo-liberal business principles and practices in government. The role of the enabling state is framed by a Third Way political ideology.

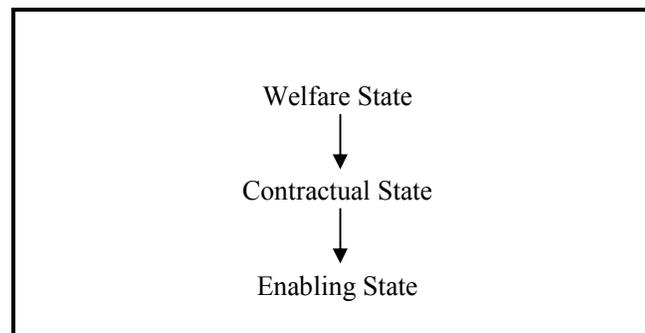


Figure 3.1: General Progression in Government Forms
(Source: Cavaye, 2004, Figure 5.2)

Table 3.1 shows the many degrees to which government and communities can engage with each other. The current focus on community engagement and citizen participation is part of the process of the emergence of an enabling state (Botsman and Latham, 2001). Government is attempting to build a facilitation and partnership road with communities that better enables community capacity and adds value to community outcomes. Community engagement necessarily means participation with the community of people, rather than an individual citizen or stakeholder groups (compare Figures 3.2 and 3.3). In working with communities government agencies must embrace pluralism and diversity, often mediated by community power relationships.

Table 3.1: A Spectrum of Government Interaction with Communities and Forms of Participation.

Behaviour of Government	Type of Participation	Spectrum of Interaction	
		Government Action	Representative Democracy
Intuitive Representation	Casting a vote	Government Action	Representative Democracy
Informing of Decisions	Passive participation	↓	↓
Consultation	Participation by consultation		
Structured Community Involvement	Functional participation		
Community Partnership	Interactive participation		
Facilitation of Community led Development	Self mobilization	Community Action	Participative Democracy

(Source: Adapted from Cavaye, 2004, Figure 5.1)

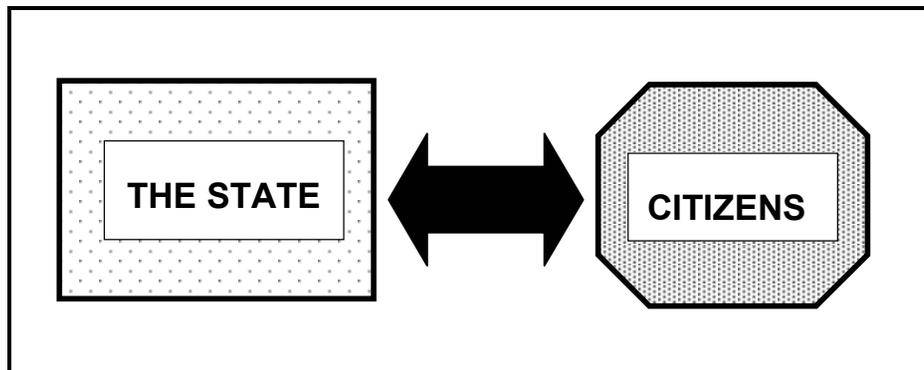


Figure 3.2 Traditional Paradigm for Citizen Participation (Source: Adapted from Innes and Booher, 2000)

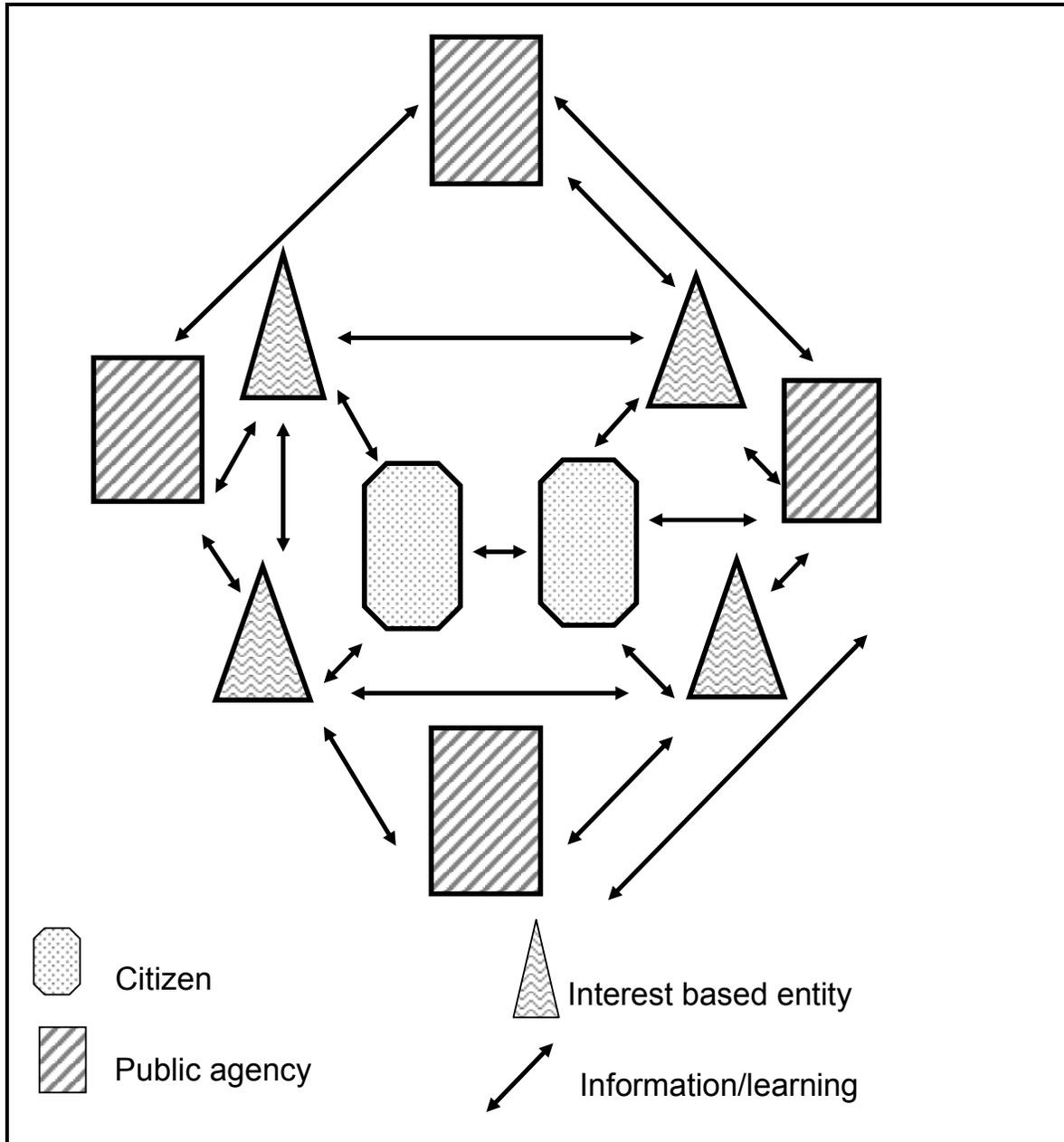


Figure 3.3 Collaborative Network Paradigm for Citizen Participation (Source: Adapted from Innes and Booher, 2000)

3.5.2. Good practice guidelines for community engagement

As shown in Figure 3.4 (next page), there is a repertoire of guidelines and methods to facilitate community engagement available in the planning practice literature. In Attlee's view:

The increasing sophistication of dialogue and deliberation methodologies over the past two decades, combined with increasingly sophisticated communication and knowledge-management systems, as well as the spread of holistic philosophies and spiritual practices, suggests that we are rapidly increasing our ability to generate collective

intelligence and wisdom through well-designed communications. We now face the task of bringing that capacity into the public trust and into official practice (Atlee, undated).

Appendix 1 provides an overview of guidance resources on public participation available on New Zealand and international websites to assist practitioners.

3.6 Social Learning

Discourses on sustainable development and participatory governance also accord importance to the significance of social learning that takes place during processes of deliberative community engagement, such as by the community outcome processes mandated by the LGA (2002).

Social learning refers to micro-level social transformations that happen primarily in a group setting as a function of group dynamics (Argyris, 1989; Diduck, 1999; Forester, 1999; Innes and Booher, 2000; Healey, 2007). Social learning entails engaging and sharing diverse perspectives and experiences that broaden world views of all participants, including planners (Forester, 1999; Schusler et al., 2003). It enhances political capacity of people to challenge traditional 'top-down' linear hierarchical methods of decision-making. Citizens can act collectively and deliberately to effect change (Hayward, 2005).

Collective learning helps individuals, communities, experts and governments work together to achieve greater social and ecological sustainability. The challenge of democratic deliberation is not to transcend or avoid conflict, but to deal with differences, encouraging learning and relationship building (Forester, 1999). Social learning promotes the development of individual emotional and practical competence, as well as the acceptance of others, and is meant to increase personal responsibility.

Forester (1999) suggests that the transformative potential of deliberative planning that dialogical and argumentative process can promote needs better recognition. It is imperative that people facilitating community engagement, such as community outcome processes, should be aware of the importance of social learning so that they can enhance an open and free dialogue, and not try to control the exchange of views (Hayward, 2000; 2005). Deliberative processes will work well when people are prepared to engage with one another, share their experiences and be prepared to listen to other points of views.

Social learning is also deemed important in the setting of plural post-colonial societies in terms of what is accepted as valid knowledge for inclusion and consideration in decision-making. Mohan (2001: 161) notes that in the West, there is an assumption that knowledge is mediated by language (e.g., text and diagrams). In other cultures, however, most knowledge is non-linguistic, tacit and generated in practice. Issues of translation into a form that decision-makers accept therefore exist. This is a major issue for consideration in promoting deliberative engagement in nations with a colonial history (Tiffin and Lawson, 1994 cited in Mohan, 2001: 154).

A map of Community Intelligence and some of its important constituents

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Participatory conversational processes such as [Dialogue and Deliberation](#) are the dominant – but not only – factors in developing [Community Intelligence](#). The form of citizen-based Dialogue and Deliberation we consider most powerful and widely applicable in support of Community Intelligence is the [Citizen Deliberative Council](#) (CDC) of which six variants are currently known. A number of other powerful deliberative processes share many characteristics with CDCs, such as Future Search and 21st Century Town Meetings, so they are depicted overlapping into the CDC circle. Likewise, a number of practices like Civic Journalism and Participatory Budget involve a considerable amount of public Dialogue and Deliberation, but involve a good deal more, as well, which centers them more in the Community Intelligence section of the map.

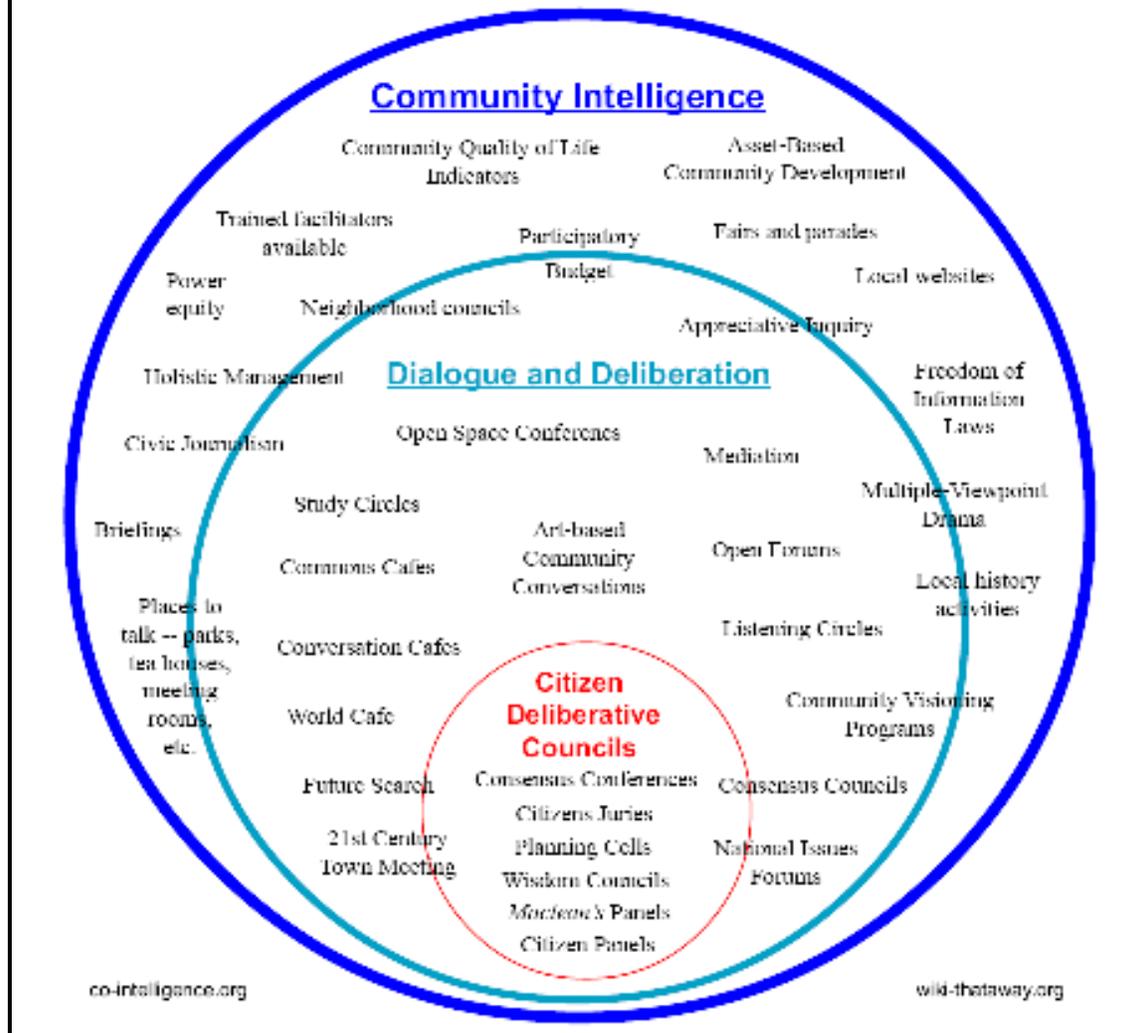


Figure 3.4 A map of Community Intelligence and Some of its Important Constituents
(Source: The Co-Intelligence Institute, April 2004. <http://co-intelligence.org/index.html>)

Kothari cautions that participatory processes designed to acquire ‘local knowledge’ can disempower people by requiring participation in institutions that reinforce existing inequalities (Cohen, 1985, cited in Kothari, 2001: 143). Knowledge, particularly of indigenous marginalized groups, can challenge established knowledge conventions and therefore may or may not be acknowledged. These observations are equally pertinent in the setting of post-colonial multicultural cities in the West where a concentration of demographic groups from diverse cultural backgrounds from the Third World is manifesting itself in new forms of cultural conflict and cultural dialogue (Keith, 2005).

3.7 Design Properties for Robust Community Engagement Processes

The properties for robust community engagement are highlighted below by first listing the main issues, and then the main dilemmas facing their resolution. But first, a general framework of critical success factors in good community - government engagement, based on Australian and international experience, is summarized in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 Attributes of Government-Community Engagement.

Elements of good Government-Community engagement	Factors that support elements of community engagement
“Will”, genuine motivation	Motivation to engage and achieve an outcome Negotiated expectations and limit
Relationships and trust	Accessibility Reciprocity Communication Consistency Continuity of contact
Leadership	Shared leadership Collaborative focus for leaders Attitudes and skills of leaders
Decision-making	Legitimacy to influence decisions A decision-making purpose for engagement
Inclusiveness	Diversity of community included Equity of opportunity to participate Processes that allow broad participation Information and awareness
Structures, procedures	Organisational arrangements Protocols Techniques and methods
Accountability	Engagement processes accountable as good practice Government accountability for outcomes from engagement Government and community with mutual obligations
Skills	Ability to manage conflict, include diversity, maintain quality communication
Satisfaction	Gauging the extent of satisfaction with engagement Managing expectations and distinguishing the process from the outcome
Follow-up, sustainability	Appropriate ongoing engagement Feedback

(Source: Cavaye, 2004 Table 5.1)

3.7.1 Issues and questions

The following is a list of issues and questions to consider in developing an engagement strategy proposed by Cavaye (2004):

- what are the necessary precursors for effective government - community engagement and partnership? What attitudes, organisation and relationships make communities and government agencies prepared for engagement?
- processes need to incorporate multiple motives for engagement, including community motives to lobby or criticize government and government's motives to showcase community engagement;
- how can communities and government enhance their own capacity to engage with each other? How can community members manage emotion, anger, power and self-interest? How can government agencies develop the skills, attitudes and resources to coordinate and manage a genuine relationship with communities?
- who represents the community in engagement processes? How does government balance the legitimacy of formal leaders and community organisations with a popular legitimacy that comes from broad community participation and informal leadership?
- to what extent does effective engagement consist of participation events or ongoing involvement, or both?
- when is there enough community engagement? At what point does government consider that an appropriate level of engagement has been reached or attempted?
- what practical strategies help communities and governments manage competing interests and conflict?
- in expanding community engagement, government may face a history of dissatisfaction in some communities. How can this be managed?
- how does government manage the risk involved in community engagement? Potential risks are committing government to action it cannot fulfil, over committing limited resources, exposing agency business to political leverage through community lobbying and possible political embarrassment;
- to what extent is engagement framed in terms of government providing better services and policy as opposed to enhancing the broader role of fostering vibrant sustainable communities;
- who has control? Can government delegate power and retain full control?
- to what extent is a comprehensive engagement policy needed, as opposed to the flexibility of more specific approaches?
- how does government ask communities how they want to be engaged?

We would add to this list:

- who makes the final decisions?

3.7.2 Dilemmas

Many of the issues that arise from a tension between participatory and electoral democracy also need to be addressed in an engagement strategy which pose dilemmas for good governance (Cavaye, 2004). They are as follows:

- working with communities must embrace pluralism and diversity. Yet, agencies must also retain the basic democratic principle of equity - making decisions for the good of all and not be seen to favour one group over another.

- agencies are under strong pressure to be efficient with time and resources and deliver clear measurable outcomes. Yet the nature of engagement is often inefficient and the effort and investment in engagement processes is often considerable.
- the traditional role of service delivery and direct assistance needs to co-exist with an enabler role. The relatively one-way relationship involved in service delivery must combine with the two-way link involved in engagement;
- agencies need to balance the development of relationships and partnership with communities with the reality of perception of agency ‘capture’;
- government agencies need to retain political and public accountability for the performance. This may offer little freedom for agencies to engage communities, which often involves experimentation, failure and flexibility;
- community engagement may involve tailor-made solutions in different communities. Yet government must retain the principle of equity and minimize precedent;
- community engagement rarely is accepted as a core business of government agencies. The silos of government often work against a seamless whole-of-government relationship with communities;
- community relationships and partnership involves long-term commitment and continuity of contact. Yet the reality is that electoral terms and budgets necessarily have a shorter time frame;
- on the one hand, community engagement implies the involvement of as many citizens as possible. On the other hand, not all citizens can, or may want to, be involved. To what extent, then do government agencies act on the issues as expressed by the motivated few or spend effort engaging the broader community;
- agencies must balance the provision of resources and expertise from outside with the importance of maintaining genuine community ownership and self-reliance;
- the attitudes and culture of communities differ from the assumptions and norms of government institutions. Community engagement processes need to respect and accommodate the cultural rules and expectations of each;
- engagement processes must deal with the tangible and intangible aspects of community development. The hard issues of jobs, infrastructure, and income need to be simultaneously addressed with softer community motivation, perceptions and values.

3.8 Building Collaborative Capacity

Identifying community outcomes is an exercise in collaboration via community engagement to explore common ground. Based on a wide ranging recent natural resource management literature review, Lysak and Weber (2007) distil common institutional process factors that can increase the probability for successful cooperation by creating for participants a genuine stake in decision processes and outcomes, an environment of trust, an opportunity to discover shared values, and an increased certainty that cooperation will lead to preferred benefits. A number of these are relevant to facilitating community engagement in the local government arena.

Inclusiveness. Successful ‘collaboratives’ must include a broad-cross section of stakeholders across interests, governmental jurisdictions, and agencies with responsibilities for the wicked problem set in question. The inclusivity factor is important for reasons of democratic legitimacy and practical considerations related to problem solving and policy implementation. This means an open access design that welcomes interested parties, and that encourages and allows a broad array of citizens and government officials to participate in proceedings, including “outsiders” who may only wish to monitor and report on collaborative activities to those outside the community where the effort is occurring. “Open access” also voluntarily endorses the

community's right to know about its proceedings, decisions, and projects by giving public notice of meetings, providing public access to meeting minutes, creating pertinent databases associated with decisions and projects, sponsoring public field trips, and, more generally, engaging the public through regular outreach activities.

Participant Norms. Collaborative problem-solving success requires the presence of informal institutions, specifically a set of informal participant norms, or behavioural expectations for all participants. To the extent that such norms are well-crafted and diffused, they help to regularize expectations regarding participant behaviour in the same way as formal structural controls (North, 2000). In successful collaborations, the norms are used to communicate the message that the character of the participation matters as much or more to trust-building than the mere act of participation.

Leadership and collaborative capacity builders. A distinctive kind of leadership is required for successful collaboration. The skills and traits required of a successful collaborative leader or facilitator are essentially the same. They include the possession of good communication and listening skills, respect for and ability to work with all sides of an issue, and strong people skills, meaning that the leader/facilitator is comfortable with, and skilled at, interaction and outreach involving a diversity of different organisations and individuals. When it comes to the leader/facilitator's role, key tasks include assisting participants in discovering common ground and the benefits of collaboration, facilitating information exchanges, and conducting the decision process in a neutral, honest, and fair manner.

Collaborative leaders/facilitators can and do come from anywhere within participant ranks. This means that collaborative leadership is not solely the domain of government officials with specific policy responsibility characteristics, less so than the *organisational location* of the leadership itself.

Credible commitment. Credible commitment by participants entails consistency in words and actions which together evidence that a participant is supportive of the collaborative decision process. Credible commitment to the collaborative institution means that participants willingly direct their power and resources to cooperate in good faith toward mutually agreeable decisions. To the extent that credible commitment exists, the more participants are able to exhibit a high degree of confidence, or trustworthiness in a participant's behaviour, and the greater the chances for collaborative success as participants become more willing to share information, receive and accept others' ideas, and engage in constructive deliberations.

Technical expertise and beyond--integrating and applying a broad knowledge base. Traditional sources of knowledge - physical, natural and social sciences as well as technical expertise - are essential to collaborative processes. Also important is a qualitatively different kind of knowledge - "local" knowledge. Local or experiential knowledge involves the individual and collective expertise of the community members most practiced or familiar with particular issues in the geographic area in question. The need for integrating, synthesizing, and balancing many different kinds of knowledge is implied by the very nature of collaborative processes focused on wicked problems.

3.9 Concluding Comments on Concepts Underpinning LGA

The overall conclusions that emerge from the analysis in Sections 2 and 3 are as follows:

- Issues relating to potential for community governance in Western democracies are problematic as the social science literature raises more questions than the answers it can provide. The literature does, however, provide useful guidance in the form of institutional design properties for facilitating community engagement.
- The community governance mandate in the LGA is constitutionally constrained since local government is central government's agent, not a partner. Notwithstanding these reservations, the community governance mandate in the LGA has opened a window of opportunity for community engagement and intergovernmental collaboration to an extent that has not been witnessed before in New Zealand.

The empirical analysis of community outcome processes as a potentially innovative institutional forum for community governance in this report and the research in the two follow-on stages of the PUCM LGA project will consider the extent to which some of these concerns about potential for community governance are reflected in recent New Zealand experience.

Legislative Framework for Community Outcomes Processes

4.1 Introduction

This Section of the report will provide an overview of the legislative framework for community outcome processes in New Zealand. The provisions of the *Local Government Act (2002)* relating to the purpose of the identification of community outcomes, the process for identifying community outcomes and obligations to report against community outcomes are summarised below in the wider context of the strategic planning, decision-making, and accountability provisions contained in Part 6 of the Act. This Section will then compare parallel provisions in the *Public Finance Act (2004)* and the *Crown Entities Act (2004)* for strategic planning as part of the current *Managing for Outcomes/Objectives* initiative in the State sector.

4.2 Community Outcomes-Focused LGA Strategic Planning Regime

As noted earlier, community outcomes are accorded a pivotal role in shaping the development of a LTCCP (long-term council community plan) as a strategic plan and its implementation subsequently via the Annual Plan process (Figure 4.1). The LGA also anticipates central government agencies and other service providers to accord cognisance to community outcomes in strategic planning.

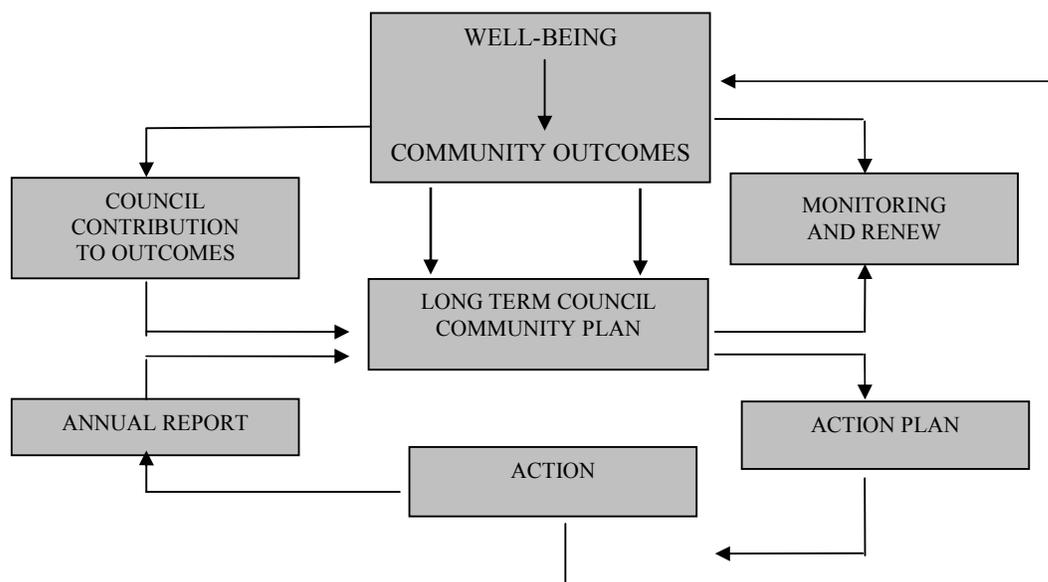


Figure 4.1: The LTCCP Strategic Planning Framework (Source: DIA et al., 2003)

The provisions in the LGA relating to the content of LTCCPs are summarised in Table 4.1 below and the provisions relating to the process for preparing an LTCCP in Figure 4.2 (next page). Together they describe the architecture of the community outcomes-focused strategic planning regime embedded in the LGA. Outcomes-focused planning is an iterative and interactive decision-making process that clarifies the outcomes an agency is seeking to achieve in the broader setting of its community's outcomes, and identifies the best ways to achieve those results. Planning and managing for outcomes relies on strategic thinking focused on the medium-term. The LTCCP reflects a local authority's synthesis of its community needs and views and of its policies and strategies, including its financial management strategies, culminating in prospective financial management strategies (Controller and Auditor General, 2007). The LTCCP is intended to provide the basis for an integrated long-term focus for a local authority to make decisions, select activities and co-ordinate the use of its resources.

Table 4.1: Provisions in the LGA (2002) relating to content of LTCCPs

<p>Section 93(6) in Part 6 — <i>Planning, decision-making and accountability</i> — sets out the purposes of the LTCCP, namely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) describe the activities of the local authority; (b) describe the community outcomes of the local authority's district or region (c) provide integrated decision making and co-ordination of local authority resources; (d) provide a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority; (e) provide a basis for accountability of the local authority to the community; and (f) provide an opportunity for public participation in decision-making processes on activities undertaken by the local authority. <p>Schedule 10 Part 1 — <i>Information to be included in long-term council community plans</i> — defines the scope and contents of a LTCCP as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1(a-d) Describe the community outcomes for the local authority's district or region, how these have been identified, how the local authority will contribute to furthering these outcomes and describe how the community outcomes relate to other key strategic planning documents or processes. 1(e) Outline how the local authority will work with other local or regional organisations, Māori, central government, non-government organisations and the private sector. 1(f-g) State what measures will be used to assess progress towards the achievement of community outcomes and how the local authority will monitor, and once every 3 years report on, the community's progress towards achieving community outcomes (Schedule 10, Part 1). <p>Schedule 10, Part 1 requires that for each group of council activities, a LTCCP must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2(1)(a-b) Identify the activities within the group of activities and the rationale for their delivery, including the community outcomes to which the group of activities primarily contributes. 2(1)(c) Outline any significant negative effects that any activity within the group of activities may have on the social, economic, environmental, or cultural well-being of the local community. 2(1)(d) Identify the assets or groups of assets required by the group of activities and identify how the local authority will assess and manage the asset management implications of changes to: (a) demand for, or consumption of, relevant services; and (b) service provision levels and standards, what additional asset capacity is estimated to be required in respect of changes to these matters, how additional asset capacity is to be undertaken, the costs and the division of costs, how they will be met, how maintenance, renewal and replacement of assets will be undertaken, and how those costs will be met. Council is required to supply this information in detail for the first 3 financial years covered by the plan, and in outline for each of the subsequent financial years covered by the plan. <p>Schedule 10, Part 1(2)(2) requires that the LTCCP information include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A statement of the intended levels of service provision for the group of activities, including performance targets and other measures by which the levels of service provision can be meaningfully assessed; (b) The estimated expenses of achieving and maintaining identified levels of service capacity and integrity of assets; (c) A statement of how the expenses are to be met; and (d) A statement of estimated revenue levels, the other sources of funds and the rationale for their selection in terms of s101(3).
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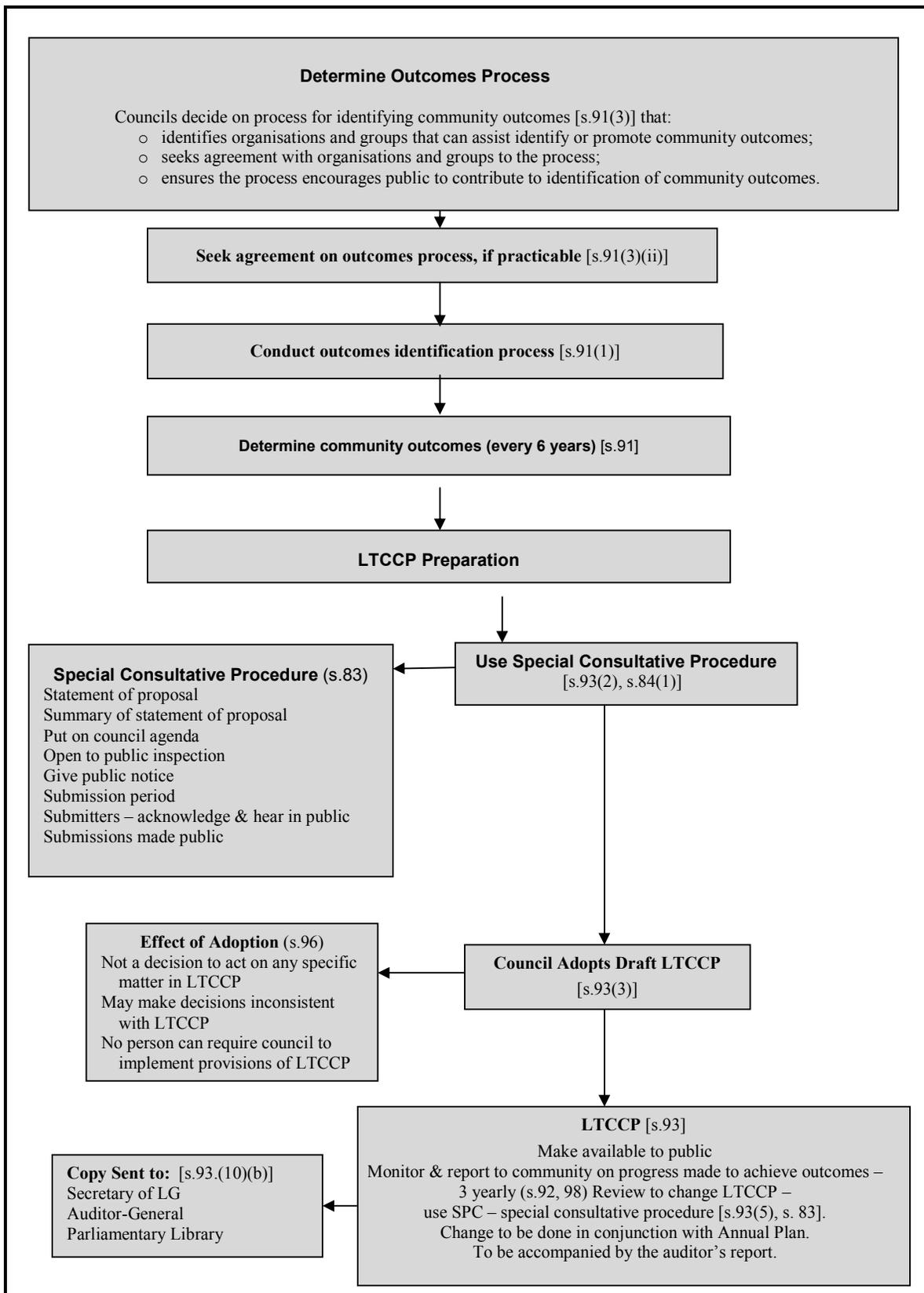


Figure 4.2: Process for preparing LTCCP (Source: based on the LGA 2002 provisions)

4.3 An Overview of LGA Provisions Relating to Community Outcomes

The community outcome provisions in the LGA relate to:

- the process for identifying community outcomes;
- consideration of community outcomes in the LTCCP;
- consideration of community outcomes in decision-making;
- monitoring and reporting progress towards community outcomes.

These four provisions are elaborated upon below.

4.3.1 Identifying community outcomes

The provisions for developing community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of a district or region (set out in the LGA) gives local authorities flexibility to facilitate a process appropriate to their own particular circumstances. Key steps in the process are in Figure 4.2 (previous page).

Purpose of local government:

- s10 The purpose of local government is-
 - (a) *to enable democratic local decision-making and action, by, and on behalf of communities; and*
 - (b) *to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.*

Principles relating to local authorities

- s14 In performing its role, a local authority must act in accordance with the following principles:
 - (a) *a local authority should –
 - (i) *conduct its business in an open, transparent, and democratically accountable manner; and*
 - (ii) *give effect to its identified priorities and desired outcomes in an efficient and effective manner:**
 - (b) *a local authority should make itself aware of, and should have regard to, the views of all of its communities; and*
 - (c) *when making a decision, a local authority should take account of-
 - (i) *the diversity of the community, and the community's interests, within its district or region; and*
 - (ii) *the interest of future as well as current communities; and*
 - (iii) *the likely impact of any decision on each aspect of well-being referred to in section 10:**
 - (d) *a local authority should provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to its decision-making processes:*
 - (e) *a local authority should collaborate and co-operate with other local authorities and bodies as it considers appropriate to promote or achieve its priorities and desired outcomes, and make efficient use of resources; and*

- (f) *a local authority should undertake any commercial transactions in accordance with sound business practices; and*
- (g) *a local authority should ensure prudent stewardship and the efficient and effective use of its resources in the interest of its district or region; and*
- (h) *in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take Into account-*
 - (i) *the social, economic, and cultural well-being of people and communities; and*
 - (ii) *the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment; and*
 - (iii) *the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.*

Definition of community outcomes:

- The Act provides the following definition of community outcomes, in relation to a district or region:
 - (a) *means the outcomes for that district or region that are identified as priorities for the time being through a process under section 91; and*
 - (b) *includes any additional outcomes subsequently identified through community consultation by the local authority as important to the current or future social, economic, environmental, or cultural well-being of the community (section 5).*

Purposes of identification of community outcomes:

- Council to design a process that meets the purposes of the identification of community outcomes as set out in s.91(2)(a-e):
 - (a) 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; and
 - (b) to allow communities to discuss the relative importance and priorities of identified outcomes to the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community; and
 - (c) to provide scope to measure progress towards the achievement of community outcomes; and
 - (d) to promote the better co-ordination and application of community resources; and
 - (e) to inform and guide the setting of priorities in relation to the activities of the local authority and other organisations.

Frequency:

- *s.91(1): “A local authority must, not less than once every 6 years, carry out a process to identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of its district or region.”*

Collaboration and public engagement:

- *s. 91(3): “A local authority may decide for itself the process it is to use to facilitate the identification of community outcomes under subsection (1), but the local authority-*

- (a) *must, before finally deciding on that process, take steps-*
 - (i) *to identify, so far as practicable, other organisation and groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes; and*
 - (ii) *to secure, if profitable, the agreement of those organisations and groups to the process and to the relationship of the process to any existing and related plans; and*
- (b) *must ensure that the process encourages the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes.*

Engaging with Māori

- *s.14(1)(d): in performing its role, a local authority must act in accordance with the principle that “a local authority should provide opportunities for Māori to contribute to its decision-making processes”.*

4.3.2 LTCCP content

The contents of an LTCCP

- *Part 1, Schedule 10: A long-term council community plan must, to the extent determined appropriate by the local authority,-*
 - (a) *Describe the community outcomes for the local authority’s district or region:*
 - (b) *Describe how the community outcomes have been identified*
 - (c) *Describe how the local authority will contribute to furthering community outcomes;*
 - (d) *Describe how the community outcomes relate to other key strategic planning documents or processes:*
 - (e) *Outline how the local authority will, to further community outcomes, work with-*
 - (i) *other local organisations and regional organisations; and*
 - (ii) *Māori, central government, and non-government organisations; and*
 - (iii) *the private sector:*
 - (f) *State what measures will be used to assess progress towards the achievement of community outcomes:*
 - (g) *State how the Local authority will monitor and, not less than once in every 3 years, report on the community’s progress towards achieving community outcomes*

4.3.3 Decision-making

Decision-making process

- *s.77 Requirements in relation to decisions:*
 - (1) *A local authority must, in the course of the decision-making process-*
 - (a) *seek to identify all reasonable practicable options for the achievement of the objective of a decision; and*

- (b) *assess those options by considering-*
 - (i) *the benefits and costs of each option in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the district or region; and*
 - (ii) *the extent to which community outcomes would be promoted or achieved in an integrated and efficient manner by each option; and*
 - (iii) *the impact of each option on the local authority's capacity to meet present and future needs in relation to any statutory responsibility of the local authority; and*
 - (iv) *any other matters that, in the opinion of the local authority, are relevant*

Significant decisions

- The Act distinguishes between decisions and significant decisions as follows:
s5 significance, in relation to any issue, proposal, decision, or other matter that concerns is before a local authority, means the degree of importance to the issue, proposal, decision, or matter, as assessed by; the local authority, in terms of its likely impact on, and likely consequences for, -

- (a) *the current and future social, economic, environmental, or cultural well-being of the district or region:*
- (b) *any persons who are likely to be particularly affected by, or interested in the proposal, decision, or matter:*
- (c) *the capacity of the local authority to perform its role, and the financial and other costs of doing so.*

4.3.4 Obligations to report against community outcomes

Monitoring and reporting:

- The planning framework for monitoring and reporting in the LTCCP planning process is summarised in Figure 4.3.

The key provisions in the Act are as follows:

s92:(1) "A local authority must monitor and, not less than once every 3 years, report on the progress made by the community of its district or region in achieving the community outcomes for the district or region".

s92(2) "A local authority may decide for itself how it is to monitor and report under subsection 1), but the local authority must seek to secure the agreement of organisations and groups identified under section 91(3) to the monitoring and reporting procedures, including the incorporation of any research, monitoring, or reporting undertaken by those organisation and groups".

Group of activities

- *An annual report must, in relation to each group of activities of the local authority,-*
 - (d) *identify the community outcomes to which the group of activities primarily contributes;*
 - (e) *report the results of any measurement undertaken during the year of progress towards the achievement of those outcomes;*

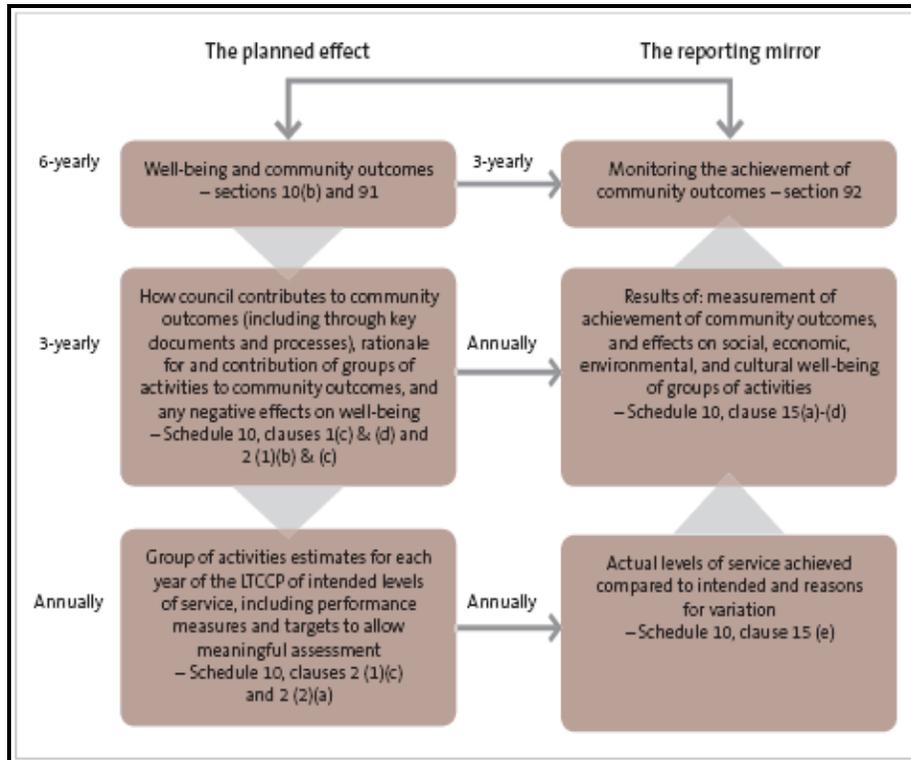


Figure 4.3 Feedback flow of performance in the Local Government Act 2002
 (Source: Office of the Auditor General, 2007)

4.4 Legislative Framework for Central Government’s *Managing Outcomes / Objectives* Strategic Planning Framework

As a reflection of developments in recent post-NPM (New Public Management) thinking internationally, many national governments, including New Zealand, have adopted the planning and managing for outcomes paradigm in recent years.

Expectations for an outcomes-focused approach to departmental management and planning apply across the state sector in New Zealand as mandated under the *Public Finance Act* 1989. In New Zealand it has been part of the Ministers' expectations for Public Service departments since 2001. The provisions of the *Public Finance Amendment Act* 2004 and the *Crown Entities Act* 2004 have reinforced these expectations for departments and extended them across Crown entities. Consequently, expectations for a results-focus in planning and managing now apply across the state sector, reflecting government interest in continuous improvement in the design and delivery of publicly funded services (Figure 4.4).

In essence, this approach is about maximising results for the available resources in every aspect of management. In performance terms, organisations that are managing for results focus on understanding, reviewing, and learning from the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations (Figure 4.4).

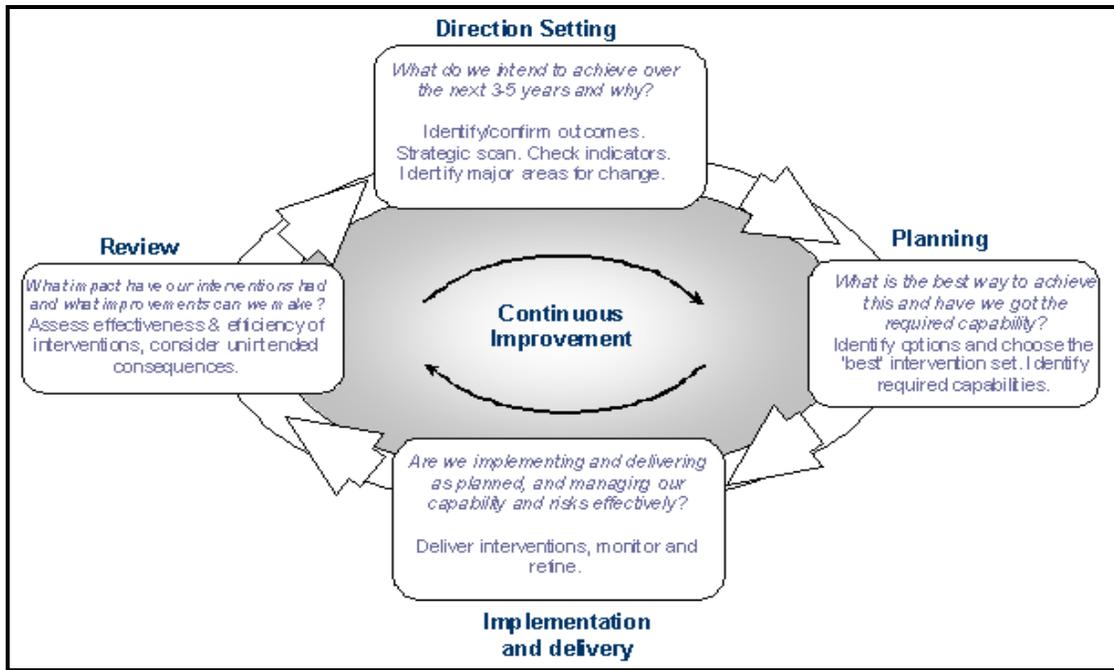


Figure 4.4 Managing for outcomes/objectives in the State sector (Source: SSC, 2007)

The *Managing for Outcomes* (MfO) initiative has been the vehicle for promoting and supporting strategic and outcomes-focused planning, management, and reporting in the State sector. This is intended ultimately to lead to better results for citizens. The legislative reporting requirements for a departmental Statement of Intent (SOI) are aligned with the MfO initiative. The SOI sets out publicly the key elements of a department’s plans and is thus expected to reflect a department’s MfO thinking.

Recently, the focus of the SSC has shifted to "planning and managing for **results**" instead of "managing for **outcomes**". Prior to the passage of the *Public Finance Amendment Act 2004* and the *Crown Entities Act 2004*, the expression "outcomes" was used synonymously with "results" as explained below. The language of the two Acts has now been expanded to include three related concepts of "outcomes", "impacts" and "objectives". The term "results" is used in the Guides for departments and Crown entities to include all three concepts.

Under section 38(2) of the *Public Finance Amendment Act* (2004), the medium-term component of a SOI must cover a minimum future period of 3 financial years⁹. Departments with longer planning horizons can, however, consider reflecting that in their SOI. The Act requires that the medium-term component of a SOI must set out and explain the following:

- What the department does
- Impacts, outcomes and objectives
- The department’s operating intentions
- Performance Measures and Standards
 - impacts, outcomes and objective
 - cost-effectiveness of interventions

⁹ Section 41 of the PFA also requires the SOI to contain more detailed information about the department’s operations for the first financial year of the SOI reporting period.

- organisational health
- Any other matters necessary to understand the department's operating intentions

The Act requires that departments set out the impacts, outcomes and objectives that they will contribute to, or achieve, in specific terms. Very general, high-level, and all-inclusive goals may make useful vision statements, but are not deemed sufficient to meet this requirement. Departments are expected to be clear about the nature of the impacts, outcomes, and/or objectives over which they have most direct influence, and specify how they and others will be able to judge success within the chosen planning period, including a sense of relative priorities and possible unintended or negative impacts (SSC, 2007).

The SOI must state how the department intends to measure the results it achieves or contributes to, and the standards (the intended level of performance within a stated timeframe) it seeks to achieve in relation to those matters. Information about the impacts the department is aiming to deliver is deemed highly desirable as it demonstrates the change in outcomes attributable to the specific actions or outputs of the department (SSC, 2007).

It is recognised that practical difficulties in being able to attribute outcome changes to particular outputs or interventions can mean that it will not always be feasible for departments to report against a range of impact measures on a regular basis. In these circumstances, outcome information and information on outputs, coverage and near-term results can be used to demonstrate performance (SSC, 2007).

The Managing for Outcomes Guidance outlines the overall focus for MfO and what is expected of departments and should be read in conjunction with 2007 *Guidance on Preparing the Statement of Intent*. The *Managing for Outcomes Guidance* has been developed and tested for the Public Service over the last four years. Information developed to support the *Managing for Outcomes* initiative can be found in Appendix 2.

The PFA Act (*Public Finance Amendment Act, 2004*) provides a definition of "outcomes" and "impacts", which applies to departments and Crown entities. "Outcome" is a state or condition of society, the economy, or the environment and includes a change in that state or condition. It normally describes a state or condition that is influenced by many different factors which may operate independently and attributing change to the activities of one agency is very difficult. "Impact" means the contribution made to an outcome by a specified set of goods and services (outputs), or actions, or both. It normally describes results that are directly attributable to the activity of an agency.

Inclusion of the term "objectives" in the PFA Act (2004) alongside impacts and outcomes recognises that not all outputs and activities and departmental functions (e.g., ministerial servicing) are intended to achieve "outcomes" as that term is defined above. Even though they do not target a direct societal, economic, or environmental effect, they can be important in the context of departmental performance, and are thus expected to be reported on in the SOI (Statement of Intent).

4.5 Concluding Comments

It has been demonstrated above that Community Outcomes Processes are pivotal to the new strategic planning regime embedded in the LGA. From an institutional analysis perspective,

however, the potential of community outcomes as a forum for community governance is potentially constrained in a number of respects.

4.5.1 The community outcomes process

As design properties, the procedural requirements in the LGA relating to the role of local authorities to facilitate engagement for community outcomes summarised above are limited in scope. The community outcomes process provisions in the LGA relate primarily to Step 1 and Step 6 of the generic deliberative engagement framework presented later in Section 8. (see Figure 8.1, p. 101). The intervening steps are a ‘black-box’ in the LGA. *The KnowHow Guide to Decision-Making* (2003), has attempted to fill this gap to a certain extent. Thus, as noted later in Section 5, local authorities reported in our 2004 scoping survey that they found the *KnowHow Guide* helpful in facilitating community outcome processes for the 2006-16 LTCCPs.

Nevertheless, as demonstrated in our empirical research findings in Sections 7 and 8, there needs to be better cognitive understanding on the part of COP (Community Outcome Processes) participants regarding the underlying purpose of COPs as a forum for community governance in the context of the sustainable development discourse. While the LGA is helpful in this respect and so to the *KnowHow Guide*, the language in the Act is understandably instrumental and the style of the *KnowHow Guide* is suggestive.

In view of this, facilitating community engagement for developing community outcomes is an informal process largely left to the discretion of each local authority while the LGA is highly prescriptive and arguably onerous relating to consultation requirements in all other respects relating to planning and decision-making -- as is evident in Figure 4.2. Lack of adequate guidance has led to statements of community outcomes which are very general, high-level, and all-inclusive goals akin to vision statements.

As discussed later in our empirical research findings in Section 7 and 8, too much legislative discretion and lack of sufficient guidance from Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) as the lead implementation agency, in an environment of limited institutional capability and resourcing in the local government sector, poses the risk that local authorities will treat their mandate to facilitate community outcomes process from a limited compliance mentality and as one of a number of functions of local government, rather than as part of a broader mandate for community governance. While we support the need for flexibility to design the community outcome process, this lack of understanding of the significance of community outcome processes may compromise its potential as a forum for community governance.

4.5.2 Extent local authorities are bound by community outcomes

At a conceptual level, a degree of commonality is evident in the outcomes-focused architecture of the respective strategic planning regime for local government set out in the LGA (2002) and the corresponding strategic planning regime for the State sector set out in the PFA Act (2004).

However, the architecture of the State sector planning regime is tightly defined within the context of the executive branch of central government. Outcomes and objectives are Ministerially defined in consultation with officials. Ministers are ultimately responsible for both the direction and priorities of their departments. SOIs (Statements of Intent) are expected to be consistent with the policies and performance expectations of the central government. Departments are therefore expected to provide opportunities for Ministers to articulate their

desired results through a process of engagement, and have clear mechanisms in place to identify whether or not these results have been achieved (SSC, 2007).

Departments are also expected to engage with central agencies as part of the strategic direction setting and planning processes which feed into the SOI. This early engagement is intended to improve the identification and consideration of ‘all-of-government’ interests and support collaboration and co-ordination between government agencies (SSC, 2007). State sector agencies are compelled to focus their activities on these outcomes and objectives and report progress accordingly as set out in the PFA Act and the SSC Guidance documents.

In contrast, the LGA is less prescriptive in certain areas. It does not compel local authorities, and much less central government, to contribute to community outcomes. Arguably, apart from facilitating community outcomes and monitoring and reporting progress towards these, it would appear logical for local authorities to also develop council outcomes for preparing LTCCPs and to monitor and report progress towards these. This poses a number of related questions for the next stage of our research. The extent of linkage that emerges between community outcomes and local authority outcomes (if any) remains to be seen. Equally important is the extent to which these two sets of outcomes inform the strategic priorities in LTCCPs. How local authorities handle the relationship between the two sets of outcomes in their LTCCPs and in their frameworks for monitoring and reporting progress towards outcomes also remains to be seen.

To achieve better integration between community outcomes and LTCCPs, it would be appropriate for local authorities to undertake a *Strategic Assessment of a Draft LTCCP* prior to public notification. Such an assessment should focus on an evaluation of how the LTCCP contributes to community outcomes. Such an exercise would be akin to the s32 analysis for an RMA planning instrument (Memon, 2004).

PART B

Empirical Case Studies:

***Base-line Survey of Local Authorities (2004) and
Participant Perspectives on the Quality of
Community Outcomes Processes (2006)***

Base-line Survey (2004) of Local Authority Implementation of LGA (2002)

5.1 Introduction

As noted in the Introduction, the empirical case studies included a baseline survey of all councils as they set about implementing the LTCCP (long-term council community plan) and community outcomes process provisions of the LGA, and a follow-up study in 10 councils aimed at assessing from participants the extent to which the community outcomes process succeeded as a forum for community governance. This section deals with the base-line survey, while the next two deal with the perceived quality of the COP process.

A base-line survey (the survey) was conducted of all local authorities in New Zealand from early October to early November 2004. It was designed to gain an overview of how the process of preparing LTCCPs was beginning to unfold in regions and districts from the perspective of local authorities. Particular reference was paid to community outcome processes and the identification of issues and concerns relating to this task. Only the essence of the survey is reported upon in this section, as the full details appeared in Borrie and Memon (2005).

The survey used a structured questionnaire that was developed in collaboration with the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ), the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and selected Canterbury local authorities.

The survey questions focused on the following key themes in the LTCCP process:

- central government policy guidance on LTCCP preparation;
- local authority capability for preparing the 2006 LTCCP;
- local authority strategy for developing a process to identify community outcomes;
- role of central government departments and agencies in the community outcomes process;
- role of non-Māori organisations and groups in the identification of community outcomes;
- role of Māori in governance and identifying community outcomes.

It was decided to survey all 86 local authorities in New Zealand: 74 territorial authorities¹⁰ (including four unitary authorities) and 12 regional councils. Staff members in 20 of these local authorities were interviewed face-to-face using the survey while the remainder were sent the survey by post as a questionnaire.

¹⁰ The TLAs are categorised as follows in terms of population size. <10,000 (TLAs); 10-19,000 (TLAs); 20-49,000 (TLAs); 50-100,000 (TLAs); 100-199,000 (TLAs); 200,000+ (TLAs).

Selection of survey respondents was determined, as far as practicable, prior to the survey being distributed. Wherever possible, a senior local authority staff member was contacted personally and asked for the name of the person responsible for the preparation of the LTCCP. Where it was unclear as to whom the appropriate recipient should be, the survey was sent to the Chief Executive (CE) to be forwarded to the most appropriate person. In some instances, the CE chose to complete the survey. In a few instances, a number of local authority officers completed various sections of the questionnaire.

The distribution of the survey was timed for the period prior to the inauguration of the newly elected council, i.e., early October to early November 2004. It had been suggested in informal discussions with some local authority staff that a potential 'window of opportunity' might exist between the final meeting of the 'old' council and the first meeting of the 'new' council. It was anticipated that staff would not be as heavily committed work-wise during that time period on account of not having to respond to requests from the mayor and councillors or prepare reports for council meetings.

Seventy three (84.9%) of the 86 local authorities completed the survey. Four advised that they would not be completing it. Reasons given for not participating included: office relocation, ill health, and work commitments.

Limitations of this survey should be borne in mind by readers. Designed as a baseline scoping survey, it provided a 'snapshot' of local authorities at a particular point of time in late 2004. Many local authorities were in the very early stages of plan preparation. Furthermore, the survey was comparatively long (58 questions), which may have acted as a deterrent for some respondents, and the person best placed to answer all the questions may not have completed the survey. At the time the survey was administered, Parliament had enacted a number of statutes that had devolved additional responsibilities to local government without necessarily providing additional resources. Many local authorities were wary of this and it may have influenced the views of some survey respondents. Notwithstanding these limitations, the findings are considered useful in providing a base-line overview of how key stakeholders were responding to the LTCCP process from the perspectives of those who participated in this survey.

5.2 Summary of Base-line Survey Findings

As already noted, the full findings from the 2004 scoping survey are reported in Borrie and Memon, 2005. The key findings from that report are summarised below.

5.2.1 Policy guidance and information provision for LTCCP preparation

The Knowhow Guides

- The *Knowhow Guides* were a useful starting point and general guide.
- Limitations were the lack of detail/specificity and practical guidance on aspects of LTCCP plan preparation

SOLGM/LGNZ seminars

- The SOLGM/LGNZ seminar series was an adequate introduction to, and guide for plan-making under the LGA.
- The limitations were the lack of detailed guidance and best practice guidance on aspects of LTCCP preparation.

Need for additional guidance on LTCCP preparation

- Half the respondents considered further information was needed.
- The main areas where additional information was considered necessary were auditing requirements, best practice, and guidance on aspects of the outcomes process.
- Audit NZ, SOLGM/LGNZ and other local authorities were identified as sources for advice, depending on the subject matter, e.g., Audit NZ for auditing requirements, other local authorities for best practice.

Policy guidance on ‘Taking a sustainable development approach’

- Opinion was divided on need for policy guidance on ‘taking a sustainable development approach’ requirement in the LGA. Some respondents considered it was for each local authority to determine within their particular context. Others considered central government should give guidance/direction.
- Any policy guidance/direction should be developed in collaboration with local authorities.

Adequacy of public information about the purpose of LTCCP

- Local authorities were seen as having a role in providing public information on LTCCP. Local authorities could do this in conjunction with other agencies or by adapting information generated by central government.
- Central government was seen by some respondents as having the responsibility as well as resources to provide this public information. Local authorities did not necessarily have the required resources.
- A national awareness-raising campaign was suggested to help increase public awareness. It would provide a consistent message and achieve greater economies of scale.

5.2.2 Council capability for 2006 LTCCP preparation

Strategy and timeline for preparing the 2006 LTCCP

- The majority of local authorities had a strategy and timeline or were working on preparing a strategy and timeline for preparing the 2006 LTCCP, i.e., they had a plan for making their LTCCP. A very small number had not thought about preparing either a strategy or timeline.

Enhancement of council capability

- A majority of local authorities had taken steps to enhance their capability for the task of preparing LTCCPs.
- A majority of local authorities had developed or were developing ‘whole of council’ procedures to coordinate the input of different council departments for preparing the 2006 LTCCP. A very small number, all from relatively small local authorities, considered it unnecessary.
- Restructuring had occurred in a third of local authorities in the previous year (October 2003-4) while other local authorities had restructured prior to that. The LGA was not the sole reason for restructuring. Staffing shortages and an increased workload were two reasons given.
- Two-thirds of local authorities were expecting existing staff to assume at least some of the work involved in LTCCP preparation. Other methods would also be used to meet staffing needs, e.g., part-time/temporary staff, consultants, or working collaboratively with other local authorities.

- Over half the local authorities had staff dedicated primarily to LTCCP preparation. There was no correlation between local authority size and the number of staff dedicated primarily, or in a subsidiary role, to LTCCP preparation.
- The number of staff involved in a subsidiary role (i.e., <10% FTE) varied significantly. The figures and the comments made by some respondents would suggest that two-thirds of local authorities are utilising staff from across council.
- Only a third of local authorities were redeploying staff, mainly from RMA, Finance, Corporate Policy, and Asset Management to the task of preparing the 2006 LTCCP. The remainder were utilising staff from across council as and when required. Some local authorities were utilising a team approach.
- Local authorities may or may not have specifically budgeted for the various components of LTCCP preparation in their Annual Budget. The amount given by respondents did not necessarily portray the full cost. In some instances considerable sums of money were allocated to LTCCP relative to the population size.
- The majority of councillors had voted via the Annual Budget, to provide the level of funding requested by staff for LTCCP preparation.

Implementation of the LTCCP provisions of the LGA

- Just under a third of local authorities found implementation of the LGA's provisions difficult or very difficult.
- The five main areas of difficulty were: resources to undertake the task; direction and guidance; meaning and interpretation of the LGA provisions; council culture and capability; and community awareness and buy-in.

5.2.3 Identifying community outcomes

All respondent local authorities were making progress in this area, but it varied and appeared unrelated to council type or population size.

Identification of outcomes desired by communities

- All respondent local authorities had begun developing a process for identifying desired community outcomes.
- Local authorities had made significant progress towards identifying the government departments, agencies and Māori and non-Māori organisations capable of influencing the identification or promotion of community outcomes.
- Just under half the respondent local authorities had secured agreement with all government departments, agencies, organisations and groups to their intended community outcomes process.
- Under a third of local authorities had secured agreement with parties to the relationship of the community outcomes process to existing and related plans.
- The most frequently used methods for encouraging public participation in the process were workshops, public meetings, websites, various media, focus groups, and forums.
- Some local authorities had used or planned to use innovative approaches in an endeavour to enhance community engagement.
- A small number of local authorities had completed community outcomes identification. They had tended to rely on prior work, which they planned to update or fine-tune.
- Over a quarter of local authorities had not started consultation (at October 2004) and a third of local authorities intended completing consultation in 2005.
- A number of issues and difficulties had emerged with respect to consultation, particularly in the area of community engagement, councillor response to the outcomes, and timing.

- The Auckland local government arrangement generated issues and difficulties unique to that region. However, some of the Auckland initiatives may have applicability in other areas given the survey responses, e.g., combined consultation for a range of documents in order to address public confusion and the varying time-frames.
- Local authorities had learnt that: communities need to be informed, in order to contribute meaningfully; the process needs to be strategic; quality results are preferable to quantity; joint consultation can reduce public confusion and criticism as well as cost; coordination of consultation across a range of documents is desirable; consultation raises expectations and therefore needs to be taken into account in decision-making if the process is to retain credibility with the public.

Collaboration amongst local authorities

- Some local authorities were working with a number of other local authorities and endeavouring to integrate a range of documents. Others were ‘going it alone’ either due to their location or tensions between local authorities.
- Some district/city councils were collaborating with a number of territorial local authorities (TLAs) as well as one or more regional councils. Despite this complexity, collaboration was occurring. Regional collaborative networks appeared to be a useful tool in some areas.
- The greatest tension or concern between TLAs was the timing of Community Outcomes identification processes followed by the disparity between TLAs in terms of capability. Different understandings and interpretations of the LGA and government department / agency boundaries were also of concern.
- Regional councils were seeking to work with a number of local authorities that may all be at varying stages in plan preparation. A lack of consensus as to the role of regional councils had generated some tension between some regional councils and TLAs.
- The areas of greatest tension between regions and TLAs were the role of regions and whether or not there were regional outcomes, plus historic tensions.
- There was no correlation between the number of regional councils/TLAs that a council had to work with and tension between these organisations.

Collaboration with government departments/agencies, Māori and Non-Māori organisations and groups

- A majority of local authorities were collaborating with all of the above stakeholder groups. However, the sheer number of potential stakeholders introduced issues of feasibility and manageability. For example, there were 100+ government departments/agencies, plus potentially thousands of organisations and groups.
- Issues and tensions with respect to government departments existed, particularly in the area of commitment to the process, different jurisdictions or boundaries, contact points/persons, capacity to contribute, role perception, conflict between the different priority levels, ability to respond at the local level, and different planning time-frames.
- Collaboration with non-Māori organisations and groups was impacted by their capacity to participate, in terms of resources.
- The process potentially raised expectations that may not be realistic.
- There was limited understanding of the process.
- The main issue when seeking to collaborate with Māori organisations and groups was their capacity to contribute in terms of time and personnel, as well as other priorities within that sector.
- Concern was raised at the appropriateness of the use of the term Māori and how to respond to and acknowledge urban Māori, particularly non-local iwi.

Prioritisation of outcomes

- Local authorities were divided as to whether or not community outcomes should be prioritised and the role of the community in this process. Some respondents were unsure whether they needed to prioritise and the role of the community in this while others had prioritised or were going to do so with or without community input.
- A number of respondents questioned how outcomes could be prioritised given that councils are required to make progress along all four dimensions of sustainable development.
- Those in favour of prioritisation were of the view that it was imperative to do so, in order to guide council decisions.

5.2.4 Developing monitoring and reporting frameworks for 2006 LTCCP

As for community outcomes, all respondent local authorities were making progress in this area, but it varied and appeared unrelated to council type or population size.

- Just over half of the local authorities were working on monitoring and reporting procedures. A number of local authorities are utilising existing monitoring and reporting frameworks and expanding on these. Others are collaborating on this.
- Monitoring and reporting is viewed as one of the more difficult/complex if not the most difficult part of LTCCP.
- The majority of local authorities had yet to reach agreement with organisations and groups as to procedures to monitor and report progress towards community outcomes. Some guidance as to the form and implications of such an agreement would be useful.

5.2.5 Perceived role of central government departments and agencies in the community outcomes process

Central government's role

- Central government was seen to be taking a variety of roles in the community outcomes process ranging from facilitator and active participant to passive stakeholder.
- Respondents were divided as to what role central government should take in the community outcomes process. Some considered community outcomes were for the community to decide and central government had no part in that. Others considered central government should be involved on account of their service delivery roles.
- The main concerns about central government were its capacity to participate and contribute; and its lack of commitment or buy-in to the process. A lack of budget commitment to LTCCP work and the fact that it was not one of the tasks against which a department/agency was required to report, were taken as signs that LTCCP were not a high priority for central government.
- Challenges were the sheer number of departments and agencies; boundary differences between TLAs, and departments; between departments and agencies themselves; inter-departmental/agency tensions; and the varying degrees of departmental autonomy.
- There is a certain amount of scepticism about the reason and usefulness of government involvement.
- Those who considered central government should be involved suggested that Ministers/Cabinet should give more direction regarding departmental/agency involvement.

Suggestions for improving involvement of individual government departments in community outcomes process

- There needed to be a whole-of-government approach, with a clear lead agency, clarification of who are the contact-staff in each region, and possibly the formation of inter-agency groups so as to enhance central government activities and programmes.
- Greater accountability was required of government departments/agencies in terms of management for achieving departmental/agency and LTCCP outcomes.
- The strategic planning of departments/agencies needed to be re-orientated to align with desired community outcomes.
- Central government needed to support local authorities by providing resources and developing working relationships.
- Greater flexibility in funding arrangements was required so as to allow collaborative approaches.

5.2.6 Perceived role of non-Māori organisations and groups in the identification of community outcomes

Progress

- Councils were making progress with community engagement, but it was variable.

Views regarding capacity and commitment of non-Māori organisations and groups to participate in LTCCP process

- Capacity of non-Māori organisations and groups varied, depending on the characteristics of the area, the focus groups and the information provided by local authorities. Their levels of expertise and understanding of the LTCCP process also varied.
- Organisation staff and volunteers were very busy, and therefore tended to focus only on their organisations particular interests.
- Commitment to the community outcomes process could be adversely impacted by lack of capacity.
- Main concerns were: their capacity to participate; securing engagement; level of understanding; raised, possibly unrealistic, expectations; and representativeness.
- Possible ways of enhancing the ability of these groups to participate were: capacity building, improving council processes and building relationships.

5.2.7 Role of Māori in governance and identification of community outcomes

Involvement of Māori

- A majority of local authorities were working on establishing processes for Māori to contribute to council decision-making processes. They had also considered ways of fostering Māori capacity and had provided information for this purpose. A small number were yet to do this.
- In some areas there were no issues or concerns regarding the role of Māori.
- In other areas a number of issues or concerns had arisen. The main ones were the lack of capacity of Māori for their role, in terms of resources and understanding; political acceptance of the role of Māori within local authorities; divisions within the Māori community; Māori understanding and expectations of the LGA; the desirability of providing mechanisms for engaging non-local 'Māori' and other foci.

- Suggested ways to address these issues were: at council level, developing relationships and building trust; having collaboratively determined strategy / programmes; developing appropriate consultation programmes; and central government clarification as to the role of Māori as well as funding and support.
- Consultation with Māori could necessarily be date-defined, and had been limited.

5.2.8 Additional comments by respondents¹¹

- Greater guidance was required from both central government and from within industry, i.e., best practice guidelines, workshops, templates, and common indicators, in order to capitalise on the commonality that exists across New Zealand and avoid local authorities using resources to ‘reinvent the wheel’.
- The capacity of local authorities to implement any proposed new legislation needed to be taken into account by central government when drafting legislation.
- Central government needed to consider granting funding assistance to local authorities when it devolves responsibility to them.
- There needed to be an equal obligation/requirement on central government as there is on local authorities, e.g., to work with local government.
- The LGA was expected to impact on council operations, potentially slowing down decision-making and increasing costs.
- Long term strategic planning was seen as difficult, given the provisions of the LGA and the RMA. Relationships with other legislation, e.g., RMA, and initiatives, such as the ‘Sustainable Cities’ programme, needed to be clarified.

5.3 Concluding Comments on Base-line Survey Results

At the time of undertaking the base-line survey in late 2004, it would have been premature to assess how well the LTCCP provisions of the LGA relating to community outcome processes were being implemented. This is because the LTCCPs were not required to be published until 2006. In 2004, local authorities were endeavoring to come to grips with their new responsibilities under the LGA. For personnel in many councils, this was a challenge. The key finding was that there were differences amongst local authorities in their understanding and interpretation of the legislation and its implementation with respect to the 2006 LTCCPs. However, there were no discernable patterns, either in terms of type or population size of local authorities. The picture presented was more like the LTCCP process itself: complex and in need of clarity in some areas, as discussed below. Several of these concerns mirrored the findings of the earlier PUCM research on the implementation of the *Resource Management Act* as a cooperative, devolved planning mandate (Ericksen, et al., 2001; Ericksen, et al., 2003; Borrie, et al., 2004, PUCM LGA Report 1).

Policy Guidance and information

Local authorities needed better policy guidance and information, in order to fulfil their obligations under the LGA. This reflected the perception that LTCCP preparation was a complex and demanding set of tasks. The preferred source of this guidance was best practice from other local authorities. Many respondents felt further assistance would be helpful in many aspects the LTCCP process, and sooner rather than later.

¹¹ The final section of the survey provided an opportunity for respondents to make any general observations pertinent to the LTCCP provisions of the LGA.

Capability and commitment of local government

Local authorities had, in various ways, sought to enhance their capability (i.e. commitment and capacity) for LTCCP preparation and were making progress in this task despite the considerable demand this placed on council resources, both financial and staffing.

What this survey showed then was the need for the Government to recognise the considerable difference in capacity and commitment among local authorities. It needed to ensure that local authorities had the requisite capability to implement the demanding mandate that it had devolved on to local government. The Government also needed to recognise that the cost of the LTCCP exercise may adversely influence the commitment of local government to the LTCCP process.

While a number of local authorities were well advanced in LTCCP preparation, it was apparent from the survey findings that some were struggling to meet the 2006 deadline, or if they did intend to meet it, would have had to limit the amount of effort put into the LTCCP.

Capability of central government agencies

There was no consensus among local authorities as to what role government departments and agencies should have in the community outcomes formulation process. Some local authorities did not see them having a role, while others expected them to be significantly and actively involved. In addition, departments and agencies themselves perceived their roles differently and were responding variably. Thus, central government involvement varied across departments and agencies as well as across the country within the same department. A significant concern for local authorities was that there is no formal requirement for central government departments and agencies to participate in the LTCCP process. Unlike local government, central government was not required to formally accord recognition to community outcomes in its planning or decision-making. This was a cause for skepticism within the local government sector about the motives of the Government.

A related concern was inadequacy of funding for central government departments to contribute to the LTCCP process. Respondent comments suggested that some departments may not have been adequately funded to meaningfully contribute to the LTCCP process.¹²

Relationship to other plans

The relationship between LTCCPs as strategic planning instruments and other statutory planning instruments, such as the RMA, lacked clarity. Little progress has been made in reaching agreement as to how the LTCCP process related to existing related statutory and non-statutory plans. This could impact adversely on making progress towards achievement of community outcomes.

Good governance

A key purpose of the LGA is to promote good governance by facilitating engagement and partnership between the civil sector (including the private sector) and central and local government sector. Local government is accorded a pivotal role in developing these relationships within the framework of the LTCCP process under the LGA. Local authorities had, to a greater or lesser degree, sought to engage with various sectors. However, the enormity of this task posed a major challenge for local authorities in terms of their capacity and

¹² A similar finding came from the PUCM RMA research where MfE and DOC as Government's implementing agencies were poorly funded for their collaborative role with local government (Ericksen, 2003; Ericksen, et al., 2001; 2003).

commitment. It also posed a major challenge for civil sector organisations and groups in terms of their commitment and capacity.

Many local authorities were uncertain whether or not community outcomes should be prioritised and whether communities should be involved in this process. This issue needed clarification. One of the purposes of identifying community outcomes was to inform and guide the setting of priorities in relation to the activities of the local authority and other organisations¹³. For that reason, an assessment of the importance placed on various outcomes by the community appeared necessary. This would also be necessary to enable councils to monitor and report on the progress by communities towards achieving community outcomes for the district or region¹⁴.

Ensuring meaningful and representative civil sector engagement in the community outcomes process was recognised as an issue by local authorities. Many were intending to use a wide range of methods to consult the public. It was unclear from the scoping report, however, how successful these methods would be in ensuring that meaningful and representative engagement occurs as this depends, to some extent, on public buy-in to the process. It was questionable if non-Māori and Māori organisations and groups would have the capability to respond to local authorities requests for information and involvement within the time frame for preparation of 2006 LTCCPs.

Some non-Māori organisations and groups were seen to have limited capacity as well as narrow foci when collaborating with local authorities. The sheer number of such organisations and groups could make engagement difficult.

Despite the provisions of the LGA, there was some uncertainty as to the role of Māori and the Treaty implications of the LGA. Māori organisations and groups were seen as having limited capacity to participate in collaboration. The level of engagement considered appropriate, e.g., political or staff level, internal divisions within Māoridom, the use of the term 'Māori' within the LGA, as well as ongoing Treaty issues and the Foreshore and Seabed legislation, had made collaboration difficult for some local authorities.

For regional councils the consultation task was even more complex. Their geographical spread, perceived limited focus, and fact that TLAs had already consulted the community, presented a challenge when seeking to engage.

Collaboration was occurring between regional and district councils and among district councils throughout the country. Joint consultation by groups of TLAs or a group of regional and district/city councils was seen as beneficial from a cost-effective perspective. However, it was also presenting challenges. The main ones were: resources, areas of jurisdiction, scale, and relationships. Historic and political tensions and parochialism were more likely to thwart collaboration than the sheer number of local authorities involved. Where there was the political and staff will, good working relationships could develop and useful collaboration could occur. The timetabling of the various LTCCP processes and different local authority capabilities had impacted the extent to which collaboration occurred. There was a section of local government that was questioning the relevance of and need for regional outcomes. This was undermining efforts by regional councils to foster collaboration. These tensions under the current LTCCP process were not unlike those experienced in the 1990s with plan-making under the RMA. As noted earlier, local authorities were collaborating with government departments and agencies. However, there were concerns about the level of commitment within central government and a

¹³ S.91 Local Government Act 2002.

¹⁴ S.92 Local Government Act 2002.

certain amount of skepticism as to the impact, if any, of LTCCP on central government's planning and expenditure.

Developing a monitoring and reporting framework

Many local authorities had begun work on this, in some instances in conjunction with other local authorities. Other local authorities were waiting until the community had identified its desired outcomes. A majority of local authorities saw developing monitoring and reporting frameworks for desired community outcomes as a difficult task. Further central government assistance with aspects of this task was seen beneficial.

Very few agreements had been reached between local authorities and various stakeholders as to the procedures to be used to monitor and report on community progress towards achieving outcomes. The long-term implications of such agreements were unclear and needed to be clarified. (The topic of community-based indicators to monitor and report on progress towards community outcomes is examined by Johnston and Memon (2008) in PUCM LGA Report 4.

6

Methodology for Evaluating the Quality of Community Outcome Processes

6.1 Introduction

In this section, the aim is to provide a methodology for evaluating the quality of community outcome processes as perceived and experienced by participants in that process. An evaluation procedure requires criteria upon which to base an evaluation. These criteria are set out in Section 6.2. They were developed by drawing on the recent international and New Zealand literatures (Sections 3 and 4) and preliminary research findings from the earlier LTCCP base-line survey (Section 5). Field methods used to undertake the empirical research on participant understandings of, and perspectives on, the community outcome process regarding the extent to which this process provided a forum for community governance are explained in Section 6.3.

6.2 Criteria for Evaluating the Quality of Community Outcome Processes

Six criteria for evaluating the quality of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance are identified in this section. These criteria are selective and reflect key themes in recent literatures on community governance, institutional analysis, community engagement, and sustainable development reviewed earlier in Sections 2 to 4 (Scott, 1998; Hayward, 2000; Carson, 1999; Cleaver, 1999; Carson, 2001; Fung and Wright, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Lovan, et al., 2004a; Cavaye, 2005; Hayward, 2005; van Bueren and ten Heuvelhof, 2005; Chess and Johnson, 2006; Johnson and Cameron, 2006; Petts 2006; Tuler and Webler, 2006; Healey, 2007; and Verma, 2007.)

The appropriateness of the criteria was also confirmed by analysis of the policy underpinnings of the LGA, findings from a 2004 base-line survey of local authorities (summarised in Section 5), and peer review feedback from practitioners. As noted, the base-line survey was designed to gain an overview of how the process of preparing 2006 LTCCPs was unfolding in regions and districts from the perspective of staff in local authorities, with particular reference to identification of community outcomes.

The evaluation criteria listed below relate specifically to examining the quality of community outcome processes as an exercise in community governance from a procedural stance, not a substantive stance. An examination of the substantive outcomes from community outcomes

processes, in other words an assessment of the content of community outcomes, is beyond the scope of this particular report¹⁵.

The six criteria for evaluating the quality of community outcome processes are given below.

1. Inclusiveness: The LGA states that local authorities must ensure that the community outcomes processes encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. To what extent have the community outcomes identification processes in communities been inclusive and thus reflective of community diversity?
2. Role of local authority as a facilitator: The LGA requires local authorities to “carry out” a community outcomes identification process, and also to encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. How and to what extent have local authorities balanced these two potentially competing requirements?
3. Integrating electoral and participatory democracy: One of the purposes of local government as stated in the LGA is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities. The Act anticipates a shift to a more participatory democratic model. How realistic are the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach in the context of the community outcomes processes?
4. Social learning: One of the benefits often attributed to community engagement in democratic processes is that it enables social learning to take place. To what extent have the community outcomes identification processes facilitated and enhanced social learning?
5. Sustainable development: Section 14 of the LGA states the principles of local government. One of these principles refers to local authorities needing to take a sustainable development approach. To what extent were community outcome processes informed by sustainability considerations?
6. Added value: The purpose of local government as stated in the LGA, is: a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future. To what degree has the community outcomes identification exercise added value in terms of these two objectives of the Act?

6.3 COP Study Field Methods

To reiterate, the six criteria listed above were used for evaluating the quality of community outcome processes (COP), as perceived and experienced by participants in the process. Having provided criteria for evaluating community outcome processes in local authorities, the methods used for gathering and analyzing data are now outlined.

6.3.1 Data collection

The empirical data draws on the experiences, opinions and beliefs of different actors involved in the community outcome process and how they interpreted the effectiveness of the process. Empirical research was undertaken which involved qualitative in-depth interviews with a range of participants in the community outcomes process of 10 local authorities. We chose 10 local authorities as case studies in order to get a representative selection of respondents from the wide

¹⁵ The next stage of the PUCM LGA study will focus on this latter question by examining to what extent community outcomes have informed long-term strategic planning priorities of local and central government agencies.

diversity of local authority jurisdictions within New Zealand (see Appendix 3). The case study councils chosen were: Auckland City Council, Auckland Regional Council, Buller District Council, Christchurch City Council, Canterbury Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Nelson City Council, Papakura City Council, Waitaki District Council, and Whakatane District Council.

We used a qualitative research approach following the guidelines of Lofland and Lofland (1995; 2006). Patton (1990) describes qualitative research as a naturalistic, inductive form of inquiry that seeks to gain a holistic perspective from personal insights within a particular context. Qualitative interviews give personal responses to questions asked and while the responses will often be predictable they will also give information that we do not anticipate (Davidson and Tolich, 1999: 146). It is suggested that intensive interviews “provide the researcher with a means of analyzing the ways in which people consider events and relationships and the reasons they offer for doing so” (May, 2001:144-145; Lofland, et al., 2006).

We had ‘conversations’ with a range of respondents who took part in community outcome processes within each local authority area. These conversations were based on semi-structured in-depth interviews. The sequence of semi-structured questions focused these conversations on the evaluation criteria listed above (Appendix 4).

For each local authority area, we sought to interview a range of participants in the community outcomes process, including:

- local authority staff;
- elected local government members;
- central government regional staff;
- community members from a wide range of organisations within sectors, such as social services, arts, sports, environmental, and others;
- iwi and Māori representatives

It was initially envisaged that focus group interviews would be the main method of enquiry. However, after completing focus group discussions in two case study areas, we reverted to individual face-to-face interviews as it was seen that people were more likely to articulate their thoughts when alone. Interviews took place in April/May 2006 and October 2006 through to January 2007 and were taped for later transcription and analysis.¹⁶

Additional interviews were also undertaken with head office staff from nine key central government agencies¹⁷ and head offices of three national voluntary sector organisations¹⁸ to get a wider perspective. There were 88 recorded interviews altogether of which 23 were with local authority officers. We obtained additional data from published and unpublished documentary sources and attendance at conferences and seminars organised by DIA, LGNZ, and SOLGM relating to the LGA.

As our first point of contact, we obtained names of potential participants from local authorities which were added to by word of mouth using the snowball sampling method.¹⁹ An outline of the research brief, a list of questions, and a consent form were sent to each individual to consider

¹⁶ Two periods for interviewing was not ideal, but caused by loss of research staff mid-way through the process.

¹⁷ Ministry for the Environment; Transit NZ; Ministry of Economic Development; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs; Ministry for Culture and Heritage; Ministry of Tourism; Department of Labour; Ministry of Social Development.

¹⁸ NZ Council of Social Services; NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations; Public Health Association.

¹⁹ The snowball sampling method is a term given to obtaining further participants from initial actors interviewed.

taking part in an interview. Each participant was contacted personally either by e-mail or by telephone. Those who were available were personally interviewed by one of the researchers. Some respondents were interviewed by telephone because they were not available at the time the interviewer was in a particular region.

A few prospective participants were unable to be contacted or unable or unwilling to undertake an interview for a number of reasons. For example, one person who did not want to take part included an elected representative who considered the community outcomes process was “*in the past and I’ve moved on from that.*”

Participants were assured of anonymity to encourage them to speak freely on the topic. Our identification shows a letter A-O as the participant’s region, the number being a participant in that region.

6.3.2 Difficulties encountered

We experienced difficulty in obtaining an even number of respondents in the different groups to interview. A challenge was getting people at the times we were conducting our interviews in the field. Telephone interviews were carried out where possible in those cases. The number of elected members who took part in our study were fewer than we had hoped, partly because some did not have an interest in taking part in the study.

It was particularly difficult to identify Māori respondents who took part in community outcome processes, which in many areas occurred at a time when consultation was being undertaken over other issues deemed more important to Māori. Consultation fatigue is an issue for some. When considering attendance at consultation hui some Māori or iwi representatives stressed they must be selective about what to take part in, as the following respondent observed: “*we have to share ourselves around ... as there are so few of us*” (A11 Iwi representative). This view was corroborated by a central government respondent who noted that:

While local government has a role in respect to iwi, the Crown has a particular relationship with Māori.... There are many many programs right across the government system, which touch on that relationship. There are some issues around ‘consult till you drop’. They are getting too many different agencies wanting to hear what their views are about particular issue. (D4 central government regional)

6.3.3 Data analysis methods

Our analysis of data pertaining to the quality of community outcome processes is based on qualitative methods of enquiry (Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Dwyer, 2001; Davidson and Tolich, 2003, Hay, 2005). Qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews provided a rich source of data based on respondent's experiences, opinions and beliefs. An interpretative, social constructivist, approach was adopted to guide the analysis of this data, which helped to interpret and understand the rationale behind the actions of respondents involved in a particular social activity and their reflections on decisions made (Sarantakos, 1998). Meanings can thereby be interpreted and understood.

The interviews were transcribed with the aid of Dragon Naturally Speaking software. Transcriptions were then annotated with a system of coding to identify common themes, issues and patterns pertinent to the evaluation criteria. We now turn the research findings.

Participants' Perspectives on Quality of Community Outcomes Process

7.1 Introduction

We present in this section our research findings on the potential of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance from the perspective of participants using a social constructionist analytical approach. We have elicited views from participants²⁰ (the respondents) on different aspects of the community outcomes process. Our overall intent was to assess the extent to which the shift from local *government* to local *governance* was reflected in the experiences, understandings, and perceptions of those who participated in community outcome processes.

We examined the extent to which participants appreciate the significance of the philosophical change underpinning the move towards community governance. Thus, findings pertinent to the six criteria for evaluating the quality of community outcome processes (identified in Section 6) are each considered in turn, including: inclusiveness of community outcomes process (Section 7.2); role of local authority as a facilitator (Section 7.3); integrating electoral and participatory democracy (Section 7.4); social learning by participants (Section 7.5); sustainable development (Sections 7.6); and the extent to which the community outcomes process added value to democratic local governance (7.7).

7.2 Inclusiveness of Community Outcomes Process

Inclusiveness of community outcomes process: The LGA states that local authorities must ensure that the community outcomes processes encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. To what extent have the community outcomes identification processes in communities been inclusive and thus reflective of community diversity?

7.2.1 Introduction and main findings - inclusiveness

One of the key underpinnings of participative democracy in the context of the community outcomes process is that the LGA required the process to be facilitated by local government for

²⁰ Local authority staff; elected members; central government regional staff; central government head office staff; community interest groups and community members; iwi and urban Māori respondents.

and on behalf of their local community. The first part of our semi-structured interview related to the *inclusiveness* of community outcomes processes from a number of perspectives, including how it was perceived by the various actors and to what extent the methods used to facilitate the process enabled participative democracy. We asked the respondents the extent to which they were included in the process, whether this was appropriate and what barriers there were to participation. We also asked our respondents to consider whether elected member participation was detrimental or beneficial and the overall extent of benefits and limitations of the process.

The main research findings are summarised below followed by a more detailed analysis.

- Local authority staff had the most significant involvement throughout the process. The extent of involvement of other actors in different parts of the process was variable.
- Engagement of the community within the process varied widely. At one end of the spectrum, some community respondents were involved in the initial planning of the process right through to its completion. In the majority of case studies, community engagement, including Māori participation, took place via consultation activities instituted by local authorities (e.g., focus group interviews, public meeting and hui) early on in the community outcomes process.
- A few central government respondents were actively involved throughout the process; most considered it local government's role and stood back unless invited.
- There was divergence of views amongst groups of respondents regarding elected members' role in the process. Some elected members saw their role being usurped by the community outcome process. A few local authority staff considered that elected members did not understand principles of shared governance.
- The relationship of local authorities with the local iwi and hapū is variable and Māori participation has highlighted fundamental relationship tensions that prevail in some localities, as well as wider structural relationship issues at the Treaty level.
- Expectations are placed on local authorities and central government agencies without resources to match.
- Time, capacity and knowledge are barriers for people in the community and within other organisations.
- Consultation fatigue is apparent for members of the community.

7.2.2 Who took part in the process?

To get a general overview, we asked five groups of respondents (local authority, elected members, central government, community stakeholders, and iwi/hapu representatives) the extent to which they were involved in the community outcomes process (none, some, significant) (Table 7.1). This overview provided an indication of where the involvement was most prevalent. The local authority staff took the most significant part in the whole process while others were involved to varying degrees. Central government officers and elected members were more likely than other groups to be involved in the steering committees and assisting with community engagement. The area that community participants, including Māori representatives, were involved was mainly at the community engagement level.

The analysis and writing up of outcome statements, along with communication to the public of the final outcomes, was performed mainly by local government staff with very little input from most other actor groups and the public generally. A few local authority staff analysed and wrote the outcomes as an in-house exercise.

Table 7.1 Respondents involvement in community outcomes identification processes

Local authority staff	<i>Involvement Level</i>		
	<i>None</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Significant</i>
Design of community engagement			X
Steering Group membership			x
Undertaking community engagement			X
Participating in community engagement			X
Information analysis			X
Writing outcomes statements			X
Prioritisation			X
Communication			X

Central government officers	<i>Involvement Level</i>		
	<i>None</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Significant</i>
Design of community engagement		x	
Steering Group membership			X
Undertaking community engagement		x	
Participating in community engagement			X
Information analysis		x	
Writing outcomes statements		x	
Prioritisation		x	
Communication		x	

Elected members	<i>Involvement Level</i>		
	<i>None</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Significant</i>
Design of community engagement		x	
Steering Group membership		x	
Undertaking community engagement		x	
Participating in community engagement		x	
Information analysis		x	
Writing outcomes statements	x		
Prioritisation	x		
Communication	x		

Community representatives	<i>Involvement Level</i>		
	<i>None</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Significant</i>
Design of community engagement	x		
Steering Group membership		x	
Undertaking community engagement		x	
Participating in community engagement			X
Information analysis		x	
Writing outcomes statements	x		
Prioritisation	x		
Communication	x		

Māori/Iwi representatives	Involvement Level		
	None	Some	Significant
Design of community engagement		x	
Steering Group membership		x	
Undertaking community engagement		x	
Participating in community engagement			X
Information analysis		x	
Writing outcomes statements	x		
Prioritisation	x		
Communication	x		

7.2.3 Was there an appropriate level of participation from within the community?

One of the keys to community governance is to ensure that participation is inclusive of all sectors of the community. The new statute creates a space for actors outside of the mainstream of public policy institutions to participate.

The majority of community participants interviewed took part because they do have local government knowledge, and/or contacts within local government and were thus invited to take part. They tended to be individuals who had previous participation experience in the local government arena. Hence, the extent of community participation did not reflect community diversity in this respect.

Community participation was also generally limited to consultation, mainly at public forums, and making written submissions. There were isolated instances where community members were part of the full process, but this was exceptional. There was also some community involvement in steering committees, but overall there was a sense within local authorities that community engagement was most appropriate at the consultation level rather than at the front end or the tail end of the process. This view was not shared by community participants. A leader of a community organisation felt there was insufficient inclusion:

The committee members of [organisation] were pretty familiar with the Local Government Act and what their requirements were. We were quite excited about the prospect of them [community outcome processes] but we have been disappointed with the result.... The Act is quite clear when it says the first step is to engage with those groups in developing the process. It's not Council process, it's meant to be a community process. I don't think it was. (B10 community representative)

Nevertheless the Act leaves it to a local authority to identify, where practicable, other groups and organisations that could assist in the process and getting agreement from those organisations or groups (LGA Section 91(3)). This means that while community groups may consider they could help to develop the process at the initial planning stage, it is not mandatory if the local authority decides it is not the most practicable way. Those authorities who included participants from the public were able to establish a process that was more inclusive, spread the workload, gave more diversity to the process, and worked within a space of trust. In this way, inclusion of the community allowed creativity of ideas to be harnessed.

A community representative explained that being included in the steering committee broadened the horizons of inclusivity:

The Council have a relationship with most people and probably the people that we [our organisation] have a relationship with are the ones that they had the hardest job of connecting with. So yeah that is the crunch. (J3 community representative)

Another respondent expressed the view that:

We were a health promotion organisation and we're looking at long-term health outcomes for the community too. We are trying to work towards more outcome related work rather than output so are familiar with the idea [of outcomes]. (B11 community representative)

7.2.4 Role of central government?

As the lead implementation agency, DIA can be expected to ensure central and local government agencies are fully aware of their role in community outcome processes and to facilitate training and support. This was considered by some respondents to have come too late for the first generation of outcome processes and there was some skepticism about DIA involvement.

A community participant stated that:

Our organisation is very ambivalent about DIA. From a voluntary organisation view [it] was a real issue about DIA not being funded as they don't have the staff or the experience. (O3 community organisation representative)

According to a local government officer:

We felt they were playing catch up well, half way into the process, yeah. (D1 local government)

A central government head office respondent was of the view that:

I think it would be fair to say that many agencies in Wellington say that DIA could have and could still play more of a leadership role in the space. They have been there, they have done things, they have held meetings, but as far as leading, they weren't necessarily mandated to lead, we would see a leadership role for them. (G3 central government HO)

Several local government staff respondents also commented on wider input of central government departments into community outcome processes. A commonly shared concern was that when the process was taking place, they had limited support from central government agencies. Comments on central government participation varied from place to place and from department to department.

Some central government agency staff saw it as a local authority 'task' and had very little involvement. While attending a public meeting on community outcomes, a comment was made by a central government official that:

We (the organisation) haven't had much to do with community outcomes but they are mandated to councils so really it's up to them to do something about them (informal discussion with researcher).

A similar view was expressed by another central government head office official:

And our reading of the Act is that local government has a requirement to consult all interested parties, to use the information that they have available, and also to report back on the achievement or progress towards community outcomes, including the contributions of all players including central government. So I think it's a lot of onus on local government to take into account central government priorities and activities as well as thinking back the other way,

which is how this is more worded in terms of central government being accountable and considering how it might change depending on local priorities. (G6 central government HO)

On the other hand, other central government officials were more enthusiastic:
I think people sometimes get confused around community outcomes and they think this is the councils responsibility maybe rather than just the Council coordinating it. But generally the Ministry is pretty au fait with the whole LGA changes and what that means for us as an organisation (G10 central government HO)

Central government officials who were well-informed about community outcome processes tended to be regional officers who either worked for an organisation that saw the community outcomes process as an opportunity for their involvement on a local or regional level with local government and the community (such as Work and Income New Zealand), or who worked for an organisation invited along to the initial meetings held by a Council.

Based on responses from central government staff respondents, participation in outcome processes hinged a lot on what funding was available. Smaller Wellington-based policy agencies had little room for doing much in that area; even though they had community outcomes as part of their work portfolio, it was not a high priority. Departments with larger resource bases with a mix of policy and service delivery roles and regional presence were able to commit more time to participate in the process.

7.2.5 Role of elected members?

The issue of participation by elected members in outcome processes is contestable, reflecting an underlying tension between electoral and participatory democracy and the assertion that community outcomes belong to communities.

Most respondents considered that elected members have a crucial role to play in the process, but they are not ‘the voice’ of the community. Most believed that elected members should be included in the process. For example, community group representatives saw it as important for because:

The more elected members are involved in it [the community outcomes process] the more they will understand what their mandate is. (A9 community representative)

A central government respondent made the following observation when discussing the merits of the community outcome process:

I don't think it would disempower elected members. I like the idea of upping the participatory stuff to remind elected members that there [are] a whole range of views out there and I take a public good perspective if you like; if they are summarised in some way that ‘we as elected members should be pursuing achieving those outcomes for the community’. There are some elected members, single issue and they all need to be reminded that there are a range of issues. (A7 central government regional)

Several local authority staff also saw the importance of councillor participation in the outcomes process:

Elected members, if they aren't involved from early in the process, it becomes an academic exercise.... I don't believe this is participatory decision-making because councillors are the ones still making all the decisions. (A2 local government)

Some local authority staff, however, were cautious. Local authority staff responses suggested elected members needed assistance to reach a better understanding of the process and how

councillors can take part in it without feeling as though their role as community representative on council is usurped. The difficulty for a few local authority staff was that they were placed in the position of having to give guidance to councillors about their role. As one local authority staff respondent observed, councillors did not have an adequate understanding of the process and their particular role in it:

I think the elected members should participate but I think that in our case last time, I remember going to the meeting where the outcomes were presented to the elected members and they didn't like some of them. One of the councillors jumped up and said 'just give me a bit of paper and I'll jot you out some really good community outcomes this afternoon'. There was a lot of confusion and they actually thought they owned it. It's not theirs; it's the communities. In a way they should be involved and they should be encouraging people to get out and have their say and have their input. But they should not be influencing the outcomes. (B2 local government)

Some local authority staff thought elected members should see themselves as a community member rather than “the” community representative. A local authority officer observed that:

I think elected members are helpful in that process because they are supposed to be speaking on behalf of the community but they are not the only people and sometimes they have to accept that others have a view that might be stronger than theirs. Also the elected members are not a good representative of all communities. And so they [steering committee] have done some focus groups of people with disabilities and people in the Pacific community in particular, people who are older. A number of those focus groups which I think helped add to the validity of the community outcomes. (B1 local government)

According to local authority staff respondents, a few elected member participants came across as very committed to the process from the beginning. Others ‘came round’ eventually, but in some local authority areas it was difficult to get any elected member interested in contributing to the process. For local government staff, it was a real concern that elected members were disinterested.

The experiences and views of councillors regarding the merits of participating in the community outcomes process were divided. There were several councillors, mayors, and deputy mayors interviewed who considered the community outcomes participation process very important in their own particular community. There were suggestions that the process reminded them as councillors what was important in the community and not just to take for granted that they knew.

A minority of the councillors were diffident. One councillor contacted by researchers commented that:

“[The Community Outcomes Process] was over long ago, I've moved on to other important things now” (person not identified).

Some councillors felt that the community outcomes process lessens their role as the elected representative of the community:

I don't believe council staff listened to councillors. They are elected to be representative and our role was usurped as an elected member. (C4 elected member)

7.2.6 Role of Māori?

In the methodology section, we explained the reason why we were not able to interview many Māori respondents for this study. This is partly indicative of the demands being placed on relatively few Māori individuals to partake in multiple consultation processes.

Those whom we did interview were reasonably comfortable with the way the process worked and allowed for people to take part. A local authority that did a separate Māori outcomes process was mentioned by several Māori respondents. Two other Māori respondents observed that:

No, I think the team spent a lot of time looking at how they could best get the information out to the community and the divergent community. So they did talk about you know, people who didn't necessarily read pamphlets and those sorts of things so running focus groups and those sorts of things. So Runanga ran focus groups for our group. So, no, I think the group spent a lot of time looking at how they could involve community. (L7 Iwi representative)

No – there were no barriers for us. We were well informed. (K5 Iwi representative)

There were, nevertheless, more general concerns expressed by almost all Māori respondents relating to Treaty-based relationship issues between the Māori and local authorities. The specific provisions in the LGA (2002) relating to Māori consultation means that local government is required to include Māori in the community outcomes process and to be inclusive in regard to Māori issues and aspirations. However, consultation with Māori was deemed a challenge for local authorities, as it was for the Māori representatives. It was felt that Māori consultation has been tokenist, did not allow for Māori needing to work through a process until everyone was happy with the outcomes, that it was a very Pakeha/European way of doing things, that iwi have undertaken consultation processes which have been disregarded by Councils, and that there were other important issues for Māori which were taking a lot of time in respect to consultation, such as the Foreshore and Seabed ownership rights conflict.

Excessive demands being placed on Māori to seek their input were also acknowledged by local authority respondents:

We didn't get enough input from the Māori community and that hinges on those eternal issues on a few being involved. (A1 local government)

It was just another one of those expectations that local government have on Māori and that we're organised enough to be able to participate at that level. It's not true. In some instances I think we have iwi groups that are quite organised [gives example], but once again I think the point you make is that Māori at that time were actively engaged with the change in the RMA and the foreshore and seabed bill. Plus to top that off there were also two iwi's in settlement process [named] ...it had a major impact on the participation and the availability of people to come to those forums, which was just not a priority at that time. (H5 local government)

A few of the local authority staff we interviewed also agreed that in their particular local authorities, there needed to be improvement in how they could include Māori and iwi representatives in the process. It was considered that many elected members knew little of the Treaty obligations and that it made it difficult for a good networking relationship to develop.

7.2.7 Barriers to inclusion?

Barriers to inclusion existed throughout the process. Some community members felt that they did not have their say to the extent they considered essential to be part of the community governance forum. For many local authorities the lack of knowhow and staff capacity did not enable the process to be fully inclusive as others then also did not know where they should fit into the process:

We weren't clear about who's doing what and the purpose of it. Then we had that reluctance to participate because we weren't sure what it is that we were intending to engage our people with. (H5 Central government regional)

Consultation fatigue is one thing, but the other thing is that they [council] don't listen. (D2 Elected member)

Historical relations between local government and the community are important factors:
I think one of the barriers that would have been around and it could be a bit around historical relationships and consultation fatigue, but not in the strictest sense. Because it was a new Council there was still some, you know, like they've never listened to us in the past, [council] what's the point... (J2 community representative)

Many responses indicated that resources in the form of money and time and capability were all factors to be considered:

I mean there [are] issues around the community groups in particular, they just don't have the funding to be able to spare the staff to be able to be involved in these types of processes [and] as local government ask a lot of the community groups in terms of commitments from them to be a party to these things. And they are a very important part of community life [community groups], but often they don't, yeah they may not have the staff or the skills that are required to be involved at that level. They just may not have the time to do it. (E1 local government)

For a government organisation:

In principal no but in practice yes... But the difficulty was that we're not resourced to do it. It's extra stuff and there's a lot of it. (E6 central government regional)

As noted, participation by community was primarily limited to consultation, with little input during other stages. A central government respondent suggested there was a lack of people involved from lower socio-economic areas and while the process did include many at organisational level it did little to make the public aware of the part they could play in the process. A mail-out leaflet and public meetings constitute a narrow view of the ways in which the public can be reached. While all residents had the opportunity to contribute in some way a fairly low level of community participation reflects the difficulty to get the community interested in community outcomes:

Where it may change is when people feel that their engagement has either not been heard or has been ignored or has been rendered obsolete by other huge demands on their council and that they're not having their community outcomes met or that central government is not engaging effectively to support a local government to deliver those outcomes; that is when the perceptions may change. Yeah. It's a tricky one actually. (E7 central government regional)

A recent migrant respondent suggested that the process is not understood by many migrants and this becomes a barrier to participation:

The process is not common for some migrants so we [the organisation] had to be selective about who we asked to be involved as they wouldn't be able to keep up with it or it wouldn't be their way of operating. It was a very strict structured forum. (A10 community representative)

If the only opportunity to participate is at a forum which has not considered language, culture or other differences, then some people are excluded not because of unwillingness, but because of institutional practices which are difficult to change.

There was limited opportunity for experimenting with alternative ways of engaging with communities:

In this area here you would get a lot more involvement if you had Wananga or Fono and you had a discussion or debate or a dialogue with people around what their issues were rather than advertise it here and you come along here and you answer the question and so on. There are many, many ways to consult and they can be expensive and they can be inexpensive. They can be time consuming or time-saving that one of the things that I would favour would be having what we have called is people's assemblies. (D2 elected member)

There was a sense of frustration from a few respondents who either knew about the process or had taken part in the process and yet still felt excluded. The following example is from a longstanding community board member who felt shut out of the process. While there was a public invitation for some events, there were also closed workshops and focus group meetings which the respondent did not know about until afterwards and felt as though they could have contributed as they had the knowledge of many years of being a community board member:

The LTCCP was foreshadowed before the legislation came, but we knew it was coming, owing to workshops before the Act came in and just after. The community can only have ownership if it has participated. (E12 community representative)

It is noted that there was a lack of interest in many case study areas within business communities. There was little evidence of ethnic minority group participation, and participation by other groups such as the young or the senior members of the community. There were limited instances where consultation was taken into schools and where migrant and refugee groups and people with disabilities were included.

More than one community respondent considered the community outcomes process was a great move forward, but that it failed at the first hurdle for them as their lengthy submissions were not included in the final outcomes. Nor were the community organisations consulted before the final drafts of the outcomes were sent out to the public. They did not want to be quoted, but considered that the council had not let go the ownership of the process, or the outcome statements.

It was considered by most respondents that if outcomes statements are to be prioritized, this should be done by the community. If it is done by the local authority, then it is likely to have a bias toward their own aspirations, which has the potential to discourage participation.

7.3 Role of Local Government as a Facilitator

Role of local authority as a facilitator: The Local Government Act requires local authorities to “carry out” a community outcomes identification process, and also to encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. How and to what extent local authority has balanced these two potentially competing requirements?

7.3.1 Introduction and main findings - facilitation

In this sub-section we explore various aspects of the community outcomes process as a forum for deliberative engagement, to develop an understanding of how the process of facilitation carried out by local authorities enabled a meaningful process to be undertaken. Understanding whether the local authority had the trust of participants from the outset or whether this developed over time was our first question. We then went on to ask how much background information should be given to participants to enable them to take part in the process, whether local authorities should take a managerial role or be more hands-off allowing the participants to

manage the process and whether the process should be facilitated by local authority in-house staff or an independent facilitator. Finally, we asked respondents to consider whether any participants dominated the process and lastly if the process resulted in aspirations reflective of the community or council.

Main research findings in response to these questions about facilitation are listed below followed by the analysis underpinning them.

- Trust of local authorities to undertake a meaningful process was generally satisfactory. There was no one single group of respondents that were either fully trustful or non-trustful of the process from the outset.
- Most respondents from all groups believed it was important to give as much information as was required to get people involved in the process, but to give them too much would not allow for ideas and aspirations to be heard and concerns could be glossed over.
- Particularly problematic was that some authorities designed and ran the process on their own without bringing in other participants.
- Local authorities dominated the process. The facilitation and management of the community outcomes process lay squarely with local authorities. Some community organisations felt a sense of frustration at the process as the same management practices were seen to be occurring.
- Central government actors in particular saw their role was to assist local authorities, but did not take the responsibility for the process.
- A hands off managerial approach was favoured to bring ownership of the community outcomes process to the community. There is a need for local authority staff not to take full control of the process; to ensure others help develop the process.
- Steering committees should be delegated some of the managerial tasks so that the workload is not all done by local authority in-house.
- Many respondents thought the idea of having independent facilitation is a good one as it means council is shown to be one of the players and not the owner of the process.
- Some respondents thought in-house facilitation should take place if the expertise is sufficient to avoid costs.
- Most people, especially community representatives, considered there was a chance to be heard and that the facilitation process ensured that no one group or person dominated.
- Many people considered that the outcomes reflected community aspirations, but with local authority domination there needs to be care that they do not become council owned.

7.3.2 Trust in the participation process?

Deliberative engagement requires trust in the process being facilitated to ensure communities are enabled to resolve problems and meet their needs in the most effective ways. There was no one single group of respondents fully trustful or non-trustful of the process from the outset. Individuals had clear views and we had both positive and negative responses from respondents regarding the development of trust in the organisation and planning of the process, particularly those from the community representatives. This is a reflection of how some processes were undertaken but also in part comes from variations in historical relationships that have existed between local government, other agencies and the community.

These are examples of comments from community representatives:

People were very focused on getting down to business and putting some stuff on paper and you know what I mean? So I don't think trust was an issue at all. (H2 community representative)

I think trust did need to be developed because it's something very new and people are generally pretty closed about something that's completely new and asking them the intimate details of their lives, you know, wanting to get inside their heads. (J3 community representative)

A culture of trust and open dialogue already existed in some local authority areas, but not in others and this makes the participation process more difficult in those latter areas. It was evident in the way respondents talked about the process whether they felt included or excluded from discussions:

The community can only have ownership if it has participated. (E12 community representative)

My understanding is that they are meant to sit down with the groups [local government] and develop the process rather than developing the process themselves and going out and talking to groups. And it was the latter one that happened. (B12 community representative)

Seen from a different perspective:

I was amazed at the diversity of people that was there so the trust must have already been there. (A10 community representative)

For some respondents, it was perceived that the council needed to be able to distance themselves from ownership and that a real understanding was the inhibiting factor:

We recommended that community outcomes be a separate document and shouldn't be part of council plan. Council is only one partner. ... Separate from other stuff, that slight distancing from normal council business may have helped people to understand more clearly that community outcomes processes belong to us and not the council only and that would widen trust in its wider sense. Too early in the process for people to have real understanding. (A7 central government regional)

I think one of the underlying issues is that community outcomes risk being self-selective. There are groups in the community that [are not used] to participate in these sorts of thought processes, they need quite a lot of support and assistance and very often it seems to me that it actually needs to be around specific proposals they can see are relevant to their lives. And I suspect the community outcomes process as it is framed, as a generality is going to struggle. There will be examples in different local authorities where there are specific things proposed or contemplated that are included in the material that is able to galvanize the wider group in the community than just the usual suspects. The people who contributed almost certainly; well trust is an interesting term, because equally I'm sure that some of the people who contributed were basically saying we don't trust you. They would have been reasonably explicit about that. (D4 central government regional)

No doubt they had some degree of trust in the participants because they were prepared to participate (D4 central government regional)

The perception from local authority staff was that trust is not to be taken-for-granted, but that the involvement of the participants was evidence of trust:

We got out to the business gatherings and groups being set up on tables and sitting down and writing down what they like and didn't like, all sorts of things. I think it needed the step, that gathering of people to then have it explained to get what you call trust. I think with trust, that sort of thing is earned as a result of not just sitting around at the initial stage, but the fact that we then seriously take all that work and start to do something with it. We certainly have taken that and linked it to the process going on now. (M6 local government) and

Well my impression from going to those workshops in particular was that it was a very good environment for that [trust] and I felt that the participants and the facilitators...it was a very trusting process and people got on with it...People were very focused on getting down to business and putting some stuff on paper, and you know what I mean [don't you]? So I don't think trust was an issue at all. (H2 local government)

7.3.3 Supplying background information?

One of the aspects of supplying adequate information at the outset of the process is to ensure that all participants can contribute from a position of knowledge. Such information should assist participants to understand substantive contextual issues in the community, the purpose of the process, how the process was to be run and the role of different participants. Most of our respondents from all of the groups believed it was important to give as much information as was required to get people involved in the process, but to give them too much would not allow for ideas and aspirations to be heard and concerns could be glossed over. The response from local authorities differed as some believed it better to give a lot of background information and others saw that as a disadvantage to deliberation:

It was framed in the sense of well-beings... So the trick would actually be, and that didn't happen in this process, would be to call those different stakeholders together to get a real grip on whether sustainability was a goer or not, not doing them in separate compartments, the way we did.... (E6 central government regional)

If the local authorities give too much information they may interfere with peoples concerns and ideas, and if there is too little information the chances of a collective understanding are diminished:

Probably somewhere between the two of them 'cause if you go in with a blank piece of paper and don't give much information and sometimes [...] it might be someone left their rubbish out on the street [the sort of things people focus on] and which really didn't have a bigger picture, kind of view, of what community was. And then if you're going in with too much detailed information it can go over people's heads or people just aren't really interested in knowing the minute details behind it but [should be] more around the intent of what it is they're doing in local government. (L4 central government regional)

Difficulties for the organisers was knowing which path to take and this comment shows that on reflection a different approach may have been more advantageous. Similar concerns were also shared by others:

I don't know which is the more appropriate and we took the former [basic information] rather than the latter [detailed information], although I think we would have preferred to have had the latter, it's quite hard to pull together really good, detailed information. (M1 local government) and

I think we probably took the first road [basic information] and it's worked really well in that you get a really honest response, but as I identified before some issues perhaps get left off because you haven't given them, sort of steered them in certain directions. So I think if you want a more honest response it's representative community views that provide the open method. If you want something that touches everything then you need to go the second path [detailed information] and steer them more so I don't know which has higher value. (M2 local government)

Similar thoughts were expressed by this community representative:

If there's a blank piece of paper in front of you, quite often, people go, 'well I don't know' and not put anything down. Whereas if you've got at least some things there for them to trigger off

their idea [...] from my heart I would say the more information you give people the better informed they are therefore the better response they can make. Possibly too the next time around it will be better because you've got, 'these are our current community outcomes are these still relevant?' (L6 Community representative)

7.3.4 Managerial approach?

Facilitating the process was a challenge for local authority staff who had to ensure that it did not become the council's outcomes exercise, but one for the whole community. Discussions with local authority staff signify this was an area with which some of them struggled from the beginning. Particularly problematic was that some authorities designed and ran the process largely on their own without bringing in other participants. Another concern was that many elected member representatives and senior council officers did not understand or were unsure about the place of this form of participatory governance.

The way the process was managed differed widely across our case studies and is attributed to local authority management practices differing throughout the country. Some councils took a relatively hands-on managerial approach to the community outcomes identification process, while others took a relatively more collaborative hands-off approach to the process.

The local authority respondents felt they had the knowledge of what was entailed to lead the process. Some community organisations felt a sense of frustration at the process as the same management practices were occurring. While they were taking part in deliberative engagement there were comments such as:

Yeah, yeah, but there was still that managerial approach, like still the powers that be within [council] were still pulling the strings. And that's not...I suppose for me I think the best approach is that local government needs to take a leadership since this is their baby basically and also having that collaborative kind of approach to getting the other stakeholders on, you know, to buy-into the process to support what it is that they're trying to achieve so yeah. (L4 central government regional)

Its an art form helping bureaucracies to learn to work differently and there's an imperative in the Local government Act for that to happen, but I don't see how they are going to do it unless they start to work differently. (B9 community representative)

Agenda is set by central government and local government - and community should be able to have more of that control. (O3 community representative head office)

I believe that we've gone from a more collaborative hands-off approach and that's what I think is the appropriate approach to use and I think we would I guess try and strengthen that collaboration and hands-off effort as we move ... through the further cycles because really they don't belong to the Council. The Council and it's planning is only responding where it can. The community outcomes and it should be on an equal footing to any other organisation that's delivering services into the region. (H5 local government)

A local authority officer reflected that:

I don't think we would be able to do a collaborative approach necessarily because the status of the community outcomes with other particularly parts of government is not very high, so it has no consequence to them and they don't see us as a priority. (B1 local government)

I think it was about right and I don't think it was particularly over-the-top managerial. But I think they were very clear about what the process is for, and what is up for discussion and what was not. I think they were quite clear about that. (B11 community representative)

Even when they considered it would have been ideal to take the engagement further, this local government respondent suggested that the community outcomes process went further than any other area of council consultation with their communities. It does not however acknowledge the need for community to be partner in the process, rather it is another form of consultation:

I can't recall the numbers but for a council consultation program I think the response was far higher than anything I've seen before. (L2 local government)

7.3.5 Professional facilitation vs. in-house facilitation?

Engaging an experienced facilitator may be one way of promoting deliberation to ensure genuine engagement. Many respondents thought the idea of having independent facilitation is a good one as it means Council is shown to be one of the players and not the owner of the process. Generally the belief was that the mix of local authority and independent facilitation is a good mix. It can be costly to have only independent facilitation and at times the local authority knows more about the process than the independent facilitator:

I think there has got to be a degree of managerial order, I think you have to have a very energetic and involved community, lots of leaders out there if you take a hands off approach in how you facilitate, I guess, this process. (M6 local government)

Councils that had used in-house facilitation did not seem to see the need for independent facilitation, but some community people did not see it the same way:

I think that independent facilitation would have really added value... (B10 community representative)

If you're in a community that has highly polarized debates, and a clear difference of opinion then good facilitation [is needed]. (E11 central govt regional)

Other respondents were satisfied, however, that the facilitation reached the right people to get community participation and commented that the difficulty was that it is not only local authorities that do not have the capacity, but it is apparent in community organizations as well. While commitment is there it was suggested by a community organisation representative:

We're a bit tricky because we're a national organisation and it's quite enough for us to get involved with all of the local authorities. What realistically can we do and we decided to focus on the councils in which we had offices. Capacity is always an issue. (B11 community representative)

7.3.6 Domination of the process?

A key to good facilitation is not allowing any individual or organisation to dominate discussions and it is apparent from those respondents who participated in the community outcomes process that domination did not occur in the engagement aspects of the process. There was little or no domination of any person. The following response was typical:

No [domination] but that's partly because of the way we set it up where it was all lots of different exercises so nobody was in a position...it just wasn't possible to happen really. (M1 local government)

And this comment from a central government regional officer was similar:

I don't think so, no[domination]. Not that I can remember. No, not that I can remember. (L4 central government regional)

7.3.7 Communities aspirations reflected?

While many of our respondents from within all the groups considered that the aspirations reflected were those of the community, there were some doubts that this was totally the case. In some local authority areas, staff were assigned to the community outcomes process to the stage of completion and while this was intended to ensure continuity, it also meant that it would be easy to perceive the process as council owned rather than community owned, and to see the process as a compliance exercise rather than a new approach to decisions:

Were they truly community [aspirations] rather than Council - I would say to an extent, but it was filtered through what council does. (A1 local government)

By and large it's my sense that they reflect community aspirations but not priorities. If you look at any one of our outcomes it will be pretty well what people would like to see, but it is not what they would like to see under the constraints of real time to funding resourcing and the ability to deploy the market, etc. (B4 local government)

I'm certainly aware that all of them [local authorities] took that very seriously and were aware of the dangers of converting them or translating them into something that lost what the community was looking for. (D5 central government regional)

Absolutely! I thought they were [community aspirations] ...I think the outcomes were great. (H4 community representative)

7.3.8 Conclusion on facilitation

Local authorities must balance the requirements of carrying out a community outcomes identification process and encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. Tensions are reflected in how local authorities have facilitated community outcomes processes. Local authority staff who design and manage community outcomes processes have to walk a fine line in this respect. From a pragmatic efficiency point of view they need to ensure that a community outcomes process is completed in time for the preparation for the LTCCP. But at the same time, they need to be cognizant of the importance of respecting the intrinsic integrity of the community outcomes process as an exercise in deliberative engagement.

7.4 Integrating Electoral and Participatory Democracy

Integrating electoral and participatory democracy: *One of the purposes of local government as stated in the LGA is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities. The Act anticipates a shift to a more participatory democratic model. How realistic are the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach in the context of the community outcomes processes?*

7.4.1 Introduction and main findings - integration

In this part of the research, we sought to consider the extent to which the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach to community outcomes processes are realistic. We wanted to know whether participants in the process were motivated to do so to promote

public good, and the extent to which they were open to understanding of others' points of view and able to empathise with them. We also considered it important to know whether respondents felt that they were given the opportunity to engage in discussion to be able to share their knowledge and perceptions. Following that we also asked them to reflect on whether trust between participants increased as the process progressed and also whether trust in the process progressed during the deliberations.

Main research findings in answer to these questions on integration are listed below followed by the analysis underpinning them.

- Participants see themselves as being motivated primarily by the public good rather than personal agendas.
- Community respondents were positive about taking part in the process and even when community organisations felt they were not heard to the extent they would have preferred they still saw it as a step toward more open deliberation in their communities.
- The various groups of respondents considered that where deliberation processes did take place they had the advantage of increasing networks in and around their own community.
- A fairly low level of community participation reflects the difficulty to get the community interested in community outcomes.
- Some local authorities have not understood that community governance allows communities to be involved in decision-making and should have more input into the process. This would extend the possibilities of different ways of undertaking democratic decision-making and would allow for cultural diversity.
- The process was considered by many respondents as not necessarily accessible to all sectors in the community.
- Forums were a good medium for being open to listening to views of others.
- Trust in the other participants ensured a sharing of knowledge. This was more likely where people had already built networks in their community, but as the trust in each other developed the trust in the process also increased. The amount of dialogue that did take place helped to build trust and will increase as discussions continue.
- For many respondents it was too early to talk about trusting the process. They are looking for evidence in the delivery towards outcomes.

7.4.2 Participant motivation to promote public good?

Without exception, there was a belief that participants were motivated by a desire to promote public good. Some made comments that people may have been there to promote their own organisation's good, but in the collective best interest. This is exemplified by the following:

I think that ninety-nine percent of the people there in my opinion are there because they believe in the community. (H6 community representative)

I think it kind of snowballed. There was lethargy to start with and then I think picked up the pace and people were engaged and excited by the time it was time to fill in your form. (J3 community representative)

Look, by default of walking through the door to engage in a democratic process I will take the giant assumption that people are there to elicit social change for the better and that they're coming there under the premise that yes this is an opportunity for me to engage at a level where I can perhaps elicit some social change, social justice, make things better for my community. And I think that that is maintained throughout the process. (E7 central government regional)

Other typical observations were as follows:

I mean the outcome [of the process] very much promoting and delivering public good and outcomes. In fact, I just don't think this sort of outcome and some of those have private benefit in them, but I think the people who participated in[the] process are doing so far for public or deliver it to public, whether it is a skate park and little kid asking, or whether its service club putting up its hands and you know later on getting involved and refurbishing at the school building and creating an art centre that's all public good. I think I would say absolutely they really exist because we want to build a better community. (M6 local government)

I think Māori who participated have always had the desire to promote public good. Did this change through the process? I can't say because we had a very small sample of Māori participating this first time around and I honestly can't say. And the people that I have followed up with that did participate there hasn't been any sort of follow up or extension of what occurred in that process, you know. (H5 central government regional)

Yeah, I think to a certain extent people were interested in why you were doing it [community outcomes process] and once they kind of understood why you were doing it and what it was all about then they were happy to answer from a community perspective. I guess there's always a bit of a sceptic in you that says, you know, that has self-interest at heart. But I actually think if you compare this process to perhaps like [the] Annual Plan or LTCCP process there's a lot, I'd say a lot less self-interest in responses. (H1 local government)

7.4.3 Open to understanding views of others and empathizing with others?

The way in which actors engaged in the process was dependent on how much they participated, what they believed was the purpose of the process and what they believed it would achieve. As a group, community respondents were more positive than many of the others as they appreciated being able to be part of the dialogue and hear what other people had to say. Even when some community organisations felt they were not heard to the extent they would have preferred, they still saw it as a step toward more open deliberation possible in their communities:

I guess in a positive statement the community outcomes have not been compartmentalized into an environment, economic, social and cultural. The community outcomes have tried to read it together. Some of the community outcomes have that cross over. That's a positive. [Community Organisation] response is the lack of thought given to changes that are going to happen in our society. (B10 community organisation representative)

The idea of empowerment through deliberation was seen as a positive aspect of the process and this central government officer considered organised community groups could use this platform to be heard:

Well I think for organised community groups there's a clear way to feed into a planning system that previously wasn't necessarily there so it's formalized a certain sense of lobbying or small group organisation at the local level so I think it's got a real empowerment potential. It largely relies on groups being aware of that new process and how to go about influencing change and I'm not entirely sure that that's come through. (G7 central government HO)

The concept of a process that was transparent also appealed to several participants:

I think its provided a framework. I think you could say the new council always is different and a different set of people with different philosophies and different approaches to how [you] shouldn't drive the community ... but I think the community outcome process gave a way that generally was keen on getting the closeness to the community, open the doors, transparent and some leadership. (M6 local government)

I enjoyed the opportunity to discuss and debate it [community outcomes process] with a range of people. I think it has certainly kind of made it more of a.... it's out there more for me and I think that I've got more of an understanding where other people are kind of coming from. (L5 community representative)

I think that... as long as the Council can show that they have collaborated, consulted, and sought expert advice on particular community outcomes then them making the decisions is fine. But they've got to...it's got to be transparent and if it is there's no problem at all. (H8 community representative)

Yes, yeah we were open to many views but also there was a mutual respect for people who worked in particular areas, you know, we have an expert in environmental issues and so on. (M4 local government)

Extending participation by additional methods of getting feedback was seen as beneficial from this perspective:

Yeah, I think ... the whole sort of concept of community outcomes is not one that appeals to the general public at large. It's this sort of amorphous term, so we, we were aware of that as an issue so we actually targeted, we set up a strategy in the stakeholder groups and we actually formally invited people, but then ...in terms of participation we used different methods of getting feedback. (H5 local government)

Lack of opportunities to acquire an adequate understanding of Māori values was raised by Māori as well as non-Māori respondents:

I thought that was really good at the workshops I was in. I think given the district we're in that's a particularly difficult issue and lots of us face barriers to getting common understanding of Māori issues because of the separation of the iwi's. And really ninety percent of us in the workshops ...would be saying we actually need more help in that area, that actually we need more work...because actually we don't really know how to work with Māori in the iwi format. We just...you know there are seven locally, it actually is blinking difficult. You might have a really good working relationship with one but not with six. And it's getting that...I don't actually have any answers for how you do that but I think those people that were at the workshops represented Māori really well in terms of putting forward feedback and things like that so.... (H2 local government)

A central government officer also expressed concern about perceptions of Māori participants:

I suppose there's always the fear amongst Māori that if you turn up and they know, being a councillor or whoever knows that you're from [tribe named] a fear that and this is amongst Māori that the assumption will be made by the partners or whoever that they are the spokesperson for those people[the tribe]. (H5 central government regional)

From a broader stance, the significance of informal institutional practices was recognised as a barrier to understanding views of others:

So I think the big thing for me is that making sure that the information is accessible and when I say accessible I mean accessible in every format, accessible in terms of language. I think literacy issues are a big issue that is often overlooked that we get tied up in the jargon of the sector and actually...For example if somebody won't go to the hospital because the hospital doesn't have gowns that are big enough then actually we need to say [to] the hospital get bigger gowns. But the trouble is that translate that into the house service that can be a fifty-page document that talks about stores. But actually we've missed the very point, the person in the community saying "I'm not going to use the service unless this changes" and that's what we

need to. It needs to be defined down to the perfect...really basic concept and I think that makes it easier for people. (H2 local government)

7.4.4 Sharing knowledge and perspectives?

A commonly shared view was that participants were willing and able to engage in deliberation. They were able to speak to each other to share knowledge and experiences. The various groups of respondents considered that deliberation had the advantage of increasing networks in and around their own community. Meeting representatives of other organisations would help working together in the future, an expectation that was apparent throughout the interviews:

People were being introduced for the first time to other networks within communities and across communities and I think it was healthy. And as new players, and for a period there I was a new player into that scene it was a good time to grow your own personal network. (D3 central government regional)

I think we can use those statements to reinforce or vice versa the way we plan our networks. That's reflective of the fact we are part of the community or we want to be part of the community and that we are responsive to the community. I think it's no longer the fact that we operate in isolation of the community which we actually exist in.... it would be interesting to see an example of a community with a specific infrastructure request to see how active central government were on that. (G4 central government HO)

A community representative was concerned that the debate did not continue after the outcomes process was carried out and the concept was not fully understood by the community at large.

To some degree. Only a minimal degree really. It was more listening then... I mean 'cause the Council basically had to sell the concept and there hasn't been the opportunity for debate after that, you know, I mean it was a piece of paper and it stayed on paper so it hasn't been lived in any public debate. They haven't been that brave. (J3 community representative)

7.4.5 Did the trust between participants and in the process increase?

Respondents from all groups recognized the need for trust to ensure participants will be prepared to engage openly. The more participants were involved, and the more opportunities they had to discuss complex issues, the more they considered that trust developed:

I think with any group that's well facilitated, trust, I mean trust is such an important part of the process, so I think as we got to know each other and found our kind of place with the group and process that worked for the group inevitably that trust developed. I think with the community consultation, part of the reason that we were there was that we had a high level of trust with the sector that we work within so in a sense the process was putting our reputation on the line and testing that so it was actually using the level of trust that we have with the community to get them to engage with the process. (L6 community representative)

Respondents from some, mainly the smaller case study areas, considered that there was already trust amongst participants because they had some form of working relationship prior to the community outcomes process. Being part of this process helped build on that trust. On the other hand, it was more difficult in the larger case study areas for participants to feel the same connection to other participants and while there was a belief that trust did increase it did not carry the same weight as in smaller areas. It was considered that the amount of dialogue that did take place helped to build trust and that it would increase as the discussions continued:

I think of the trust as being earned and therefore there is a time to trust and I would like to think the trust between this organisation council, the Mayor, the councillors and communities as

being increasing and I think it has to a large extent because of community outcomes process and the extent we are talking. (M6 local government)

Trust.... I think in the sense of networking and meeting and I think the other thing that really struck me was that, it's only from an organisational point of view, most of the people knew each other quite well in the small context of [the] New Zealand city. I mean I was quite struck compared to my experiences elsewhere that to be in that you would know maybe one or maybe ten percent of that audience. From my reading and discussion with people, most of the people knew each other well. So the trust issue was...that was one of the joys compared to elsewhere because of the smallness. It wasn't like people hadn't work with each other. (E5 central government regional)

While trust could be identified amongst those who took part there was some scepticism about the amount of trust that could be expected from the wider community, as this community representative portrays:

Yeah, whereas at the moment to have trust you have to have a relationship first and I don't know that the community feel connected enough to feel that they... I don't know that there is as much expectation even [the need to feel connected]. (J3 community representative)

And a central government exponent commented that:

I think there is trust in the individuals, but I'm not too sure that there is trust in the process. At the moment they still haven't delivered the evidence to say. (D3 central government regional)

7.4.6 Conclusion on integration

A shift to a model of community governance in the LGA is based on a number of assumptions. When asked to reflect on this, respondents perceived themselves as being involved in the community outcomes process primarily for the common good. However, they are realistic and pragmatic and are cognisant of the nature of the ways of interest-based democracies. They are also aware of other constraints on participatory democracy, including lack of accessibility, willingness to listen to views of others, trust and public apathy. The possibilities of community governance would be extended, if local authorities 'let go the reins' and included the community in the decision-making processes.

7.5 Social Learning

Cognitive learning and social learning: *One of the benefits often attributed to community participation in democratic processes is that it enables cognitive and social learning to take place. To what extent has the community outcomes identification processes facilitated and enhanced cognitive & social learning? Have actors collectively learned about the issues that have emerged through the process? Have actors learned from and about each other resulting in new understandings and new ways of viewing issues?*

7.5.1 Introduction and main findings - social learning

Deliberative engagement helps those involved to increase their understandings of the multitude of issues that are involved in community governance and leads to satisfaction with resultant outcomes. Including a diversity of people in decision-making gives more opportunities for debate as to process issues that may not be considered in a narrower consultation model. Accordingly, we analysed the respondents' perceptions of how much the process had contributed to an increased level of common understanding of community issues and aspirations,

including Māori interests. We next move onto ascertaining the extent to which the process resulted in a sharing and commitment to community outcomes and whether the respondents or their organisations personally learned anything new from the process. The main discussion focused around what people learnt from each other (social learning) and little comment was made as to how much self awareness had changed (cognitive learning). In practice, it is, however, difficult to make a distinction between cognitive and social learning.

For respondents participating extensively in community outcomes processes there was a clear feeling there had been significant social learning. This has largely been confined to steering groups and similar working groups which have met on a regular basis over a period of time. Participants almost without exception have reported much improved new understanding of other organisations. There is a clear correlation between the time spent together working through complex issues, including consultation design, and the level of new learning which has resulted.

Main research findings in answer to this question are listed below followed by the analysis underpinning them.

- Most participants felt the community outcomes identification process had enabled a platform to develop in terms of relationships and understandings that would make working together to achieve community outcomes more successful.
- The process has enhanced social learning especially amongst those who had greater opportunities to take part in the process.
- Local authority staff were concerned that knowledge is not widely shared within their organisations.
- Institutional inertia is still prevalent which inhibits progress with little ground made in understanding Māori issues.
- Several respondents considered that methods should be developed which are more culturally inclusive to ensure a greater degree of participation.
- Responsibility remains with local authorities with central government often a reluctant participant.
- The process itself helped respondents to better understand the views of their own community, and to understand needs in a more holistic way.

7.5.2 Increased level of common understanding of community issues and aspirations?

There are as many social histories as there are actors and so the interchange of ideas comes from many perspectives. When the differences are acknowledged, shared understanding occurs. It is when differences are not acknowledged that progress does not occur, at least as far as otherwise possible and this prevents a change in institutional practices. This is an important aspect of developing community outcomes processes as without that shared understanding the deliberation is limited. Most participants felt the community outcomes identification process had enabled a platform to develop in terms of relationships and understandings that would facilitate working together to achieve community outcomes:

It has enabled a better collective understanding of interconnectedness of what we do and the outcomes that we are trying to achieve. All of the outcomes we are trying to achieve are dependent on all our efforts to a certain extent. Some of the outcomes are reasonably predictable, but I just emphasize the real value is getting better understanding of the interconnectedness between what we are all doing and being able to focus together on to those priorities. (D5 central government regional)

I think the social learning thing is [what social learning means] the poor speaking to wealthy, the business person talking to the artist and this is all new to me, learning and I'm really impressed. Now I am a strong advocate of saying this process does that and it's really important.... I think it has done that to an extent and this is early days ...So it's the start. (M6 local government)

Being in the position that allows for open dialogue enables participants to understand others' positions and can mean they find more common ground than at first realized. It allows for 'give-and-take' and can help to build networking relationships for the future. Those who did get involved in the community outcomes process often saw it as a good means to developing partnerships and networks within their community:

It's dependent on the individual because one or two I can think of ... are very poor listeners and very opinionated and can be very dysfunctional in a small group. You could call them toxic; you could spot them a mile off. If there was one of those it could quickly kill a whole process; the other could be sparking off each other, you got a full range. The majority [was] open to understanding others and particularly in the community, but the business community is driven by individuals and I don't think they changed their approach to the processes. But there was definitely a recognition that there were different approaches and most of it came down to the individuals and how much they would put into empathizing with the others. (A1 local government)

For some local authority respondents, lack of understanding about community outcomes amongst their colleagues was a concern:

I think if you walk through the building [local authority office] you would have a hard time finding people[staff] who knew exactly what community outcomes are. This is the group that has to achieve them because likes of consents officers wouldn't have a clue. I think in the long run its good but I don't think it changes how people view us or the community. (C2 local government)

7.5.3 Increased level of common understanding of Māori issues and aspirations?

Discussion in 7.2.6 demonstrated that a perceived challenge in most local authority areas was in knowing how to include Māori in the process in a way that enabled meaningful deliberative engagement to take place. A parallel Māori outcomes process in one of our case study areas was mentioned as a desirable practice. There were several suggestions that methods should be developed which are more culturally inclusive to ensure a greater degree of participation. The comments below signify the depth of misunderstanding in relation to facilitating a process that is fully inclusive. In addition, the constraints of time and capacity were reasons for not considering alternative options. There is a struggle in some local authority areas with immersion of Māori cultural practices:

From the elected member level there is a real struggle to understand or to accept Māori. A lot of them philosophically don't understand the Treaty or they don't want to understand the Treaty relationship. (B1 local government)

And the Runaka themselves challenged the Council about their consultation or lack of consultation with Māori, but I don't know whether it increased the common understanding of those issues amongst participants. The opportunity was there to raise the issue which I think was valuable. (B11 community representative)

Some isolated comments such as this below indicated that the process did allow for an increased understanding of Māori interests in this case study area:

The process changed for the better when it was decided to incorporate Māori perspectives. (K3 central government regional)

From a Māori perspective, their ways of doing consultation need to be embraced by council and the wider community:

With the iwi, we have our own process for everything. There is a process that we feel we must stick to. Very often this is how do we come to the outcome and very often the outcome is through, we usually have a facilitator, with Council and ourselves, she will take us through the various spiritual sides of where we start from - earth, sea and that sort of thing. That process that we go through and the understanding of that is described fully to the Council to the extent that they are almost using it themselves now. That's wonderful. That's a tick to us because they can see much clearer why we choose to have a process such as this and it's like the mauri ora there, that's the process that we use to go through all of these things. (A11 iwi representative)

I suppose when it comes to Māori outcomes and the desire is always to promote the public good and we talk about ki tiaka tanga you know when you're talking about tikanga it's around providing for everybody as opposed to just us 'cause you don't live in isolation from anybody else and so when we talk about Māori outcomes it's from a more very holistic view and so it's always been that way really. And I mean when we talk about public that also would extend to include environmental welfare and things like that so it's just not about the people aspect. (M5 local government)

7.5.4 Sharing of responsibility and commitment?

Because the process of identifying community outcomes was facilitated by local authority personnel, participants came to see responsibility for sharing information about the community outcomes and commitment to achieving them remaining with local authorities:

I think that's still developing and I think that now that the projects been put under the long-term plan of the Council I think that this is something that will be developed further. It's probably a wee bit early to say just yet. (C1 local government)

The people on the steering group were quite keen to keep an integrated approach going especially through the next part afterwards[monitoring and reporting toward outcomes]. But that wasn't endorsed by Council, in particular the Mayor. (L3 community representative)

I think that's very much a work in progress. (E7 central government regional)

It's making little steps and the councils I think are driving this harder than central government is ready for. (E8 central government regional)

We've got to be thinking differently and we all need to be thinking differently and sharing resources. But I think that's an education process that isn't magically going to happen, unfortunately. (H2 community representative)

A minority of respondents were guardedly positive about the prospects for a more collaborative approach:

Seems to be quite sectored. Developers in their way of looking and saying that they going to be committed to long-term plans [but will change their minds] until they get their resource consent. Then there are those of us who were looking at community outcomes around social issues and we do expect the Council to take a role, but we've never expected them to fully; so we share the responsibility in that way. (B11 community representative)

So in terms of community outcomes one of the things that did come up at our hui was, 'Oh what's the good of doing all this when we're talking about education and the high schools are giving out kids green cards and having to stand down and you know how's that all going to fit into the picture. So in terms of that partnership response we're able to then lobby the Ministry of Education and other areas like that around some of these short falls that have been identified. (M5 local government Māori representative)

7.5.5 Increased level of personal and organisational understanding of issues and aspirations?

The process did provide respondents with greater overall picture of what aspirations people in the community do have and this was seen as a very positive aspect of being involved. It also helped people to realize that achieving community outcomes requires inclusion of a wide range of people from within government and community sectors. Respondents considered that the process itself helped them to better understand the views of their own community, and to understand needs in a more holistic way. While it was considered by many to be early days in this new form of democratic decision making, it was seen as progress never-the-less:

Thinking back to the consultation to the meeting - that meeting as a whole was great. It was great to get the wider picture and for me to hear other people's priorities. I think specifically back to the meeting; I came out of there going wow! (A11 iwi representative)

It actually wasn't a surprise but it was just looking at things in a different way because people came from a different side of table. And I think that's a really healthy thing. (H3 community representative)

Well I think the very nature of the process which I guess gets people in the same room from different walks of life, different age groups, different backgrounds if your process is run well then people do get an opportunity to, a true opportunity [to] participate and learn from each other and that gives them a new perspective. To my mind learning comes from listening and not everyone's a good listener but it certainly provides a wonderful opportunity for new insights and learning whether or not everyone chooses to take that on board, you know. (H5 local government)

Our [organisation] understanding of the community outcomes process is greater than what it was when it was initially put to us last year. (H2 central government regional)

There were few surprises for respondents in what they learned from the process, but it was considered a guide to a personal understanding:

It's created a significant pool of information that can be searched. (L1 local government)

It did increase my level of knowledge because this is the only country in the world that have this intense focus on community outcomes backed by legislation. (B4 local government)

7.5.6 Conclusions on social learning

The discussion with respondents in this part of the research identifies that there is much to be learned through people getting together and discussing issues that affect well-being in their community. There was an overall positive response to learning from each other and this will help to build social capital, especially if the networking processes are continued, a necessary part of institutional change. There was mixed enthusiasm about the concept of sharing

responsibility and as has been the case throughout the analysis of the data, the understanding that shared governance is a responsibility for all has been overlooked. The opportunities for public decision-making to be an interactive process that involves multiple actors from government and community (including the business sector) is yet to be realized. Social learning has further potential to increase awareness of this LGA objective.

7.6 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development: Section 14 of the LGA states the principles of local government. One of these principles refers to local authorities needing to take a sustainable development approach. Have the community outcomes processes been informed by sustainability approaches and to what extent?

7.6.1 Introduction and main findings - sustainable development

One of the purposes of the LGA is to provide for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural-well being of communities by taking a sustainable development approach. This part of the discussion focuses on the extent to which respondents felt a sustainable development approach was reflected in the community outcomes processes.

Main research findings in answer to this question are listed below followed by the analysis underpinning them.

- There was reluctance for organisers/facilitators to talk about sustainable development explicitly during community outcome processes. However, because the term “sustainable” is often mentioned in the outcome statements, it was considered by some local authority staff that it meant a sustainable development approach was used.
- It was considered positive by some respondents to have sustainable development incorporated into the community outcomes process so that sustainability is seen for its importance.
- Several respondents considered that there was very little common understanding of what sustainable development means and the concept needs to be explained and defined at a local level.
- The four well-beings were considered by some respondents to be seen in silos during discussions and not seen as a holistic approach to sustainability. Recent central government initiated sustainability pilot projects were seen by some respondents as non-sustainable.
- Some community and Māori respondents consider that people understand the need to think intergenerationally, but are less clear about making decisions now that will be of future benefit a lot further forward than the next two generations. A different cultural perspective would assist this learning.
- Most respondents considered they already understood concepts of sustainable development and the process did little or nothing to enhance their understanding.
- A small number of respondents considered that the discussions broadened understandings of sustainability.
- The process was not recognized as being a sustainable development approach to decision-making.

7.6.2 Explicit inclusion of sustainable development concepts?

A forum with different participants bringing their own interpretations brings multiple perspectives and new knowledge is gained through this social learning. Difficulties arise, however, when the discussion not only avoids particular concepts, but is planned to do so. Our interviews indicate that often there was reluctance for facilitators of the process to talk about the sustainable development concept explicitly. The different interpretations of sustainability and sustainable development arguably make it a concept where views will differ widely, thus making it difficult to be explicitly included in discussions. Generally, sustainable development was not explicitly included in community outcomes discussions and engagement. It was generally felt by our respondents that the LGA and community outcomes themselves are examples of sustainable development and that to include the concept explicitly in community discussions would have been unworkably complicated:

Yeah. I don't think that was clearly articulated and even then I don't think there was discussion around what certain words to use, that communities might not understand or, you know, throw around terms that we as agencies talk about all the time, yeah so I don't actually know. (L4 central government regional)

Probably it was mentioned but not in any great depth and that's probably, that's an area that I identified of work that we need to put some effort in to Council, you know, from the Council perspective, in terms of providing a leadership approach in the future. (H5 local government)

The quote below was from a member of a sustainability organisation indicating satisfaction that as an issue, sustainability has become part of the community outcomes agenda and is becoming mainstreamed in important decision-making processes. The participant believed it is good to have sustainability included in the legislation as it does bring an awareness to a growing number of people. Bringing it into the agenda is an important step:

I think the legislation is good in principle. The quality of the implementation is not as good. It lags behind the principle. Not least because you are dealing with the politicians who can and do act as a barrier. They have exposed a much larger number of previously uniformed and skeptical people to an issue that we have banted on about for some time. They have acknowledged that what we were going on about might be significant. Now that public awareness growth means we are coming in from the fringe towards a mainstream. We haven't changed, but the wider society has changed. There is a big shift to a sustainability awareness. People don't know what to do, but they know its an issue and the very acceptance of an issue means that our effort to educate doesn't feel wasted. (B12 community representative)

Community outcome statements that use the sustainable development language does not in itself mean that sustainable development is occurring. What is done to achieve those outcomes is important. If they are included in the full process the community will share responsibility for outcomes. This was the intention of Agenda 21 which brought the focus of sustainable development into the realms of the social, cultural, and economic arenas. Respondents considered that councils need to educate their own staff first and get their own principles in place in terms of sustainability as until they do that the community cannot effectively become sustainable. The economic element dominated discussion:

So until councils themselves are providing core services under all four well-beings so that their checking if they do this okay it's good for economic. But what does it do for culture? What does it do for social? What does it do for environmental? (E8 Central government regional)

[Our Community Organisation] response is the lack of thought given to changes that are going to happen in our society. Hadn't been reflected. Climate change, energy issues; those two in

particular and even a major disaster. I guess it will be there under civil defence. We talk about resilience and that whole attention to resilience and adaptation to change is not built in. It's too much of a business-as-usual kind of model. Sustainability to us is that resilience and that adaptation and it seems to be missing. ...it is about integration and holistic....(B10 community representative)

While some processes did not focus on sustainable development it was felt by some of our respondents that the need to plan forward was recognized by participants in the process although to a limited degree:

You probably have to review the responses to the feedback, but certainly people understood the concept of intergenerational issues and also the need to consider future generations. A small percentage was very much about local issues, but the majority of the participants understood this is a strategic, out there for several generations. In discussion we made the point that the indigenous people talk many generations where the pakeha is one or two generations. It's a paradigm. We tried to stress that we needed to take it beyond that. And they tended to think in terms of the grandchildren and not beyond that. That was probably the gap. (C3 local government)

But through process like this we could actually be clarifying what sustainability actually is and what it means to people and how all these sectors contribute it, but we keep avoiding it. (L3 elected member)

7.6.3 Common understanding of sustainable development concepts reached?

Roseland (1998: 22) notes that “There is no (and perhaps should not be any) single accepted definition of sustainable communities. Communities must be involved in defining sustainability from a local perspective”. As inferred above, it is difficult for a common understanding to be reached within a community when the discussion does not include the concept of sustainable development. As the community representative below explained:

I think the sustainable development concept is like a little badge that people wear to be cool and hip than like really understanding or replying. I mean talk about sustainability, you know, nothing is sustainable at the end of the day. Cultural, quite possibly, but you have to work hard. Social, environmental and economic are so intrinsically linked that there are compromises around them. Dialogue or even about how it affects our community around the simplest things isn't engaged in. It's...no. We'd love to have that to have some dialogue around that wouldn't we? Because we're always talking about issues of sustainability but the theory of firm managerial economic sustainability theory is the one that tops the list and if you don't fit that box well we're not....it's really hard to engage on any other level. It really is difficult. (J3 community representative)

The respondents had varied replies to our question regarding the degree of understanding and in some cases it was considered that the discussion was explicit about including the four well-beings and explanations of what that meant in terms of sustainability:

I didn't know there were actually four. I always thought of it as being three because that's how the international discourse had gone for years and years. But the cultural one I think with just increase in diversity and the need to accept that the common good might look different depending on what set of eyes you look at it through I think sort of added to that discourse. Yeah so it was explicit. (E6 central government regional)

This same respondent did not think they went far enough in the discussion to ensure there was a blending of the dimensions and thought the silo effect was still taking place, and those actors

interested in social aspects for example not taking into account economic or environmental necessarily:

I wouldn't say that the full sustainability thing cross-pollinated as effectively as it might have. (E6 central government regional)

It is easy to misinterpret the meaning behind understandings and the remark below suggests that the principles of sustainability had to be put to one side to engage participants in dialogue. Looking into the future through a sustainable development lens may have seen a very different set of aspirations come through:

The community was asked to look into the future which sometimes required them to discard principles of sustainable development. (K3 central government regional)

The community outcomes process, while it does appear to be abstract, is a chance for communities to decide what they desire in the next 10 years. Deliberative discussion will assist communities to reach common understandings and builds on social learning which will be carried into the future as this central government officer explains:

So I actually think from what I'm seeing out there that the understanding of sustainable development, the importance of it, the importance of developing social infrastructure opportunities whilst regions are growing and developing to get that infrastructure in now to make sure it's going to meet the needs of the people later on. There's been a massive shift towards that in a really positive way so yeah I think it's really grown. I'm quite excited about it. (E7 central government regional)

Other respondents were positive that the community outcomes process did assist in broadening an understanding of sustainability:

Sustainability always used to be very much just an environmental focus and that's not the case anymore. And I think community outcomes has helped to get that message out to a wider audience although there's still those that you know you say sustainability and they think of the trees. (E1 local government)

This response acknowledges the need for taking a different cultural perspective:

You probably have to review the responses to the feedback but certainly people understood the concept of intergenerational issues and also the need to consider future generations. A small percentage was very much about local issues but the majority of the participants understood this is a strategic, out there for several generations. In discussion we made the point that the indigenous people talk many generations where the pakeha is one or two generations. It's a paradigm. We tried to stress that we needed to take it beyond that. And they tended to think in terms of the grandchildren and not beyond that. That was probably the gap. (C3 local government)

And these respondents considered that central government is not operating in a sustainable way as pilot projects being offered to some communities are not sustainable when offered short term, with no funds for their longer term extension:

Communities especially at large are turning around and saying, 'We don't want pilots in our community. We don't like pilots because they're not sustainable. Do not give our community something that cannot be sustained. Do not build up the expectations of our people and then say you know a few months down the track well you've had your time over now and go and do it without any continuance or succession planning of where delivery is going to be'. So I actually think from what I'm seeing out there that the understanding of sustainable development, the importance of it, the importance of developing social infrastructure opportunities whilst regions are growing and developing to get that infrastructure in now to make sure it's going to meet the

needs of the people later on. There's been a massive shift towards that in a really positive way so yeah I think it's really grown. I'm quite excited about it. (E7 central government regional)

Well in terms of the Māori community for example they've really taken to this like there's no tomorrow really. But the thing is we're always advocating about not setting people up to fail and one thing that I'm trying to get my head around is the fact that come June next it's not going to be there. (M5 local government)

7.6.4 Enhanced personal understanding?

Participants felt that people are greatly concerned about the future of their communities and they understand what it means to take a sustainable approach to long term outcomes. Most respondents said they had a good understanding of sustainable development prior to community outcomes process and the process did little to enhance their understanding. These responses were typical:

No not at all (E8 central govt regional)

I don't think it's helped or enhanced my personal understanding. (L2 local government)

Hasn't. (K1 local government)

Sustainability was not widely recognized as part of the community outcomes process and this DIA officer suggested the Act is not clear, which makes it difficult for the concept to be explained to communities:

I think sustainable development in the Act is not explained at all. It's using a sustainable development approach and what does that mean; how do you explain the concept to communities? To me it is just as simple as thinking about the impact of the decisions for the future. The durability. (F3 DIA)

Whatever they knew of the community outcomes process... I don't think improved it a lot. Some people might know a lot and that is fine. Some people might have known a limited amount. I don't think there was anything in that process that would have changed our ethos around sustainability. Yeah, I think yep. Because that should have driven some of the outcomes. (L3 elected member)

On the other hand this respondent identifies that discussion does raise questions:

What it's done is made me think quite a bit about how do you set up things that are processes that are sustainable in community context, so I think...it hasn't at that level of what's happening in the sustainability world, I've got sort of reasonable awareness of those kinds of things anyway. But it's sort of much more, how do you actually make this stuff happen on the ground. I think it's increased my... I've probably got more questions but that's not a bad thing to have, you know, it's really tough and it shouldn't be approached in a doctrine kind of way, that's what I think. (M1 local government)

There were others who considered that the inclusion was implicit with the belief that people would understand it, but perhaps did not, while other responses showed that discussions do enhance personal and social learning:

Yeah, I mean, I think that any process like this broadens one's consciousness and so it has to be good for that alone. Yeah. (J3 community representative)

It's probably broadened my view of sustainable development and broadened the context that sustainability sits in now. (E1 local government)

Another comment:

I feel, ironically, that the principles of sustainable development that they have put in the LGA are stronger than what they have put in the RMA quite frankly. It's got a stronger base because of that, and community expectations. I found that it does increase my understanding of it. (C3 local government)

Others felt they learned a lot from the process in gaining a personal understanding of sustainable development:

I enjoyed the opportunity to discuss and debate it with a range of people. I think it has certainly kind of made it more of a.... it's out there more for me and I think that I've got more of an understanding where other people are kind of coming from around...and particularly who's using it more or less (L5 community representative)

7.6.5 Conclusions on sustainable development

Our interviews in this part of the research suggest that the community outcomes processes were not generally informed by sustainable development approaches and discussions were not always focused around these concepts. Understanding of what a sustainable development approach to the community outcomes process means was limited. Most respondents considered they personally knew what it meant to take a sustainable development approach although some respondents were positive in the way the discussions started to broaden thinking about sustainable concepts. Criticism of local government not working towards sustainability also demonstrates that those who took part in the process did not come to clear understandings of sustainable development. There was also concern from within the community, from Māori, and from a few at local authority level, that central government needs to consider sustainable communities in their policy decisions.

7.7 Added Value to Democratic Local Governance

In this final part of our discussion we reflect on the purpose of local government as stated in the LGA, i.e.- (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future. To what degree have community outcomes identification exercise added value in terms of these two objectives of the Act?

7.7.1 Introduction and main findings - added value governance

The LGA is a legislative instrument for community governance. The community outcomes process is expected to be the catalyst to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities and to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. In this section we have identified some ways in which respondents have considered the community outcomes process has added value in terms of the objectives of the Act and whether the participatory governance model advocated for decision-making within local communities has become a recognizable platform for sustainable development. Even though the potential has not been fully realised, the community outcomes process does have the potential to add greater value to community policies and decisions as it matures. Opportunities through the LGA to carry out a form of community governance, is a platform to bring people in the communities together.

Main research findings in answer to the question above are listed below followed by the analysis underpinning them.

- Concept of community outcomes process has been embraced to varying degrees by different sectors. Community organisations would like to have more involvement, as there remains a challenge for elected members, many central government agencies, Māori, and the business community to become more involved as partners. Minority groups had little involvement.
- Central government has only partly taken up the challenge of realizing a holistic and interactive approach to policy and decision-making.
- The opportunity has been opened to empower local communities and the networking opportunities have been considered beneficial.
- There is a perception amongst respondents that many people in the wider public do not have the capability or capacity to take part due to other commitments in their lives and or not understanding the opportunities of the community outcomes processes in community governance. Civic education requirements are evident in this area.
- Local authority staff require support of management and elected members who often saw the process as a compliance exercise.
- The process is a chance for local authorities to work with key stakeholders within their own communities.
- Elected members missed the opportunity that shared governance offers.
- Need for wider recognition of engaging through a different cultural lens.
- Many participants from all sectors do not have the resources, time or money to take part in the process to the extent that they consider is necessary to do justice to the process.

7.7.2 Concept embraced by different sectors?

Local government involvement

Most local government officers with a high level of participation in the process saw the community outcomes process and the community engagement that accompanies it as best practice strategic planning. Unfortunately, they have often been unsupported by elected members and senior management in terms of resourcing and commitment. Senior management and officers in the “hard” sectors of councils (finance and asset management) appear largely uninterested in community outcomes and few seem to have participated in community outcomes processes. This has meant in many cases a relatively small group of people has been left to undertake community outcomes and other LTCCP processes while the rest of the organisation attends to core business. This is particularly the case in smaller councils and has left many LTCCP officials stressed and exhausted.

Local authority staff, certainly those who took part in the process did embrace the concept although there were differences in the perceptions within and across different council offices:

There’s definitely a difference within and between councils. For many in the council it appears that their primary motivation is the legislative requirement and fitting that, passing the audit requirements. (E8 central government regional)

Many local authority staff felt that the taking part, being a first time process, was going to lead to better understanding and practice as time went on. It was early days and things would get better when the next round took place:

Well from a council perspective I guess we put a barrier up in the process because we didn’t want it to be seen as a Council process...But I think if community outcomes are, if as a process and as a way of, I guess, planning resources by all organisations, although we’re required to run the process it really needs to be seen that its not a Council process. (H5 local government)

Respondents considered there was a difference between elected local authority members and local authority officers in the way they perceived the process. Elected members tended to focus on the tangible outputs of the process, that is the outcomes statements, and have not always been impressed by what has emerged. The high level nature of the outcomes statements and the lack of detail have left many elected members considering the process a waste of time:

[h]aving a community outcomes process you know sort of legislated. It doesn't put the oomph into it and I think the language and everything isn't really very, community outcomes sounds so jargon and it's kind of empty as well. (D2 elected member)

And from a community participant:

I assume the Council has embraced it; they better. (B11 community representative)

Central government involvement

Central government is not outside of the community governance framework and the community outcomes and community indicators should be regarded as contributing to a whole-of-government approach. Central government agencies are expected to collaborate with local government to respond to community outcomes. If the opportunity is not seized upon, then the risk is that business-as-usual will continue. Central government actors considered there had been a learning curve for their agencies in understanding that they do have a pivotal role in the community outcomes process. There was a feeling, especially coming from local authority staff, that central government could and should be doing more to assist in the process. It was felt that most central government agencies did not see the importance of their role and that apart from one or two key agencies, the central government participation was too little and more support to local authorities was essential. Part of the problem is seen as the language of the Act. The need for central government's own strategic planning processes to consider the community's outcomes would bring a more coordinated approach to planning:

Its not part of their mandate to have to do it and until the government send some pretty strong directives, you will cooperate and participate in this, we will get some where. (C3 local government).

I think it would be incredibly advantageous for both central and councils if all four key well-being agencies plus DIA were able to be involved in the community outcomes process through the consultation. Now that's costly and time-consuming. But I think without that communities don't see a cohesive approach and local authorities don't feel supported by central government. They think that a key area for potential for future development. (G6 central government HO)

The central government staff who operate from national offices, mainly in Wellington, are key personnel in policy formation. On the other hand, those working in the regional offices are operational staff 'on the ground' and so become more aware of everyday happenings in their region or area of interest. These are the key people to work within communities. It was apparent that in some of the processes, central government agencies became very involved throughout the process and in some areas there was little input from central government, but individuals recognized the need for their involvement:

Central government is so varied that depends not just on the Department but on the individuals so is pretty hard to comment on that. We are disappointed in the central government lack of a sustainable development strategy and there move away from creating one. (B10 community representative)

There is some hesitancy in central government agencies to be involved with local government activities where local projects do not fit the priorities of the central agency. On the other hand,

some central government agencies find resistance in local communities to some community-oriented projects, such as state housing and facilities for youth offenders:

It is very healthy for us to be informed about the views of all sorts of communities of interest. That's going to enable us to provide better advice to the minister. Basically our legislation is framed in a way that says the minister is the boss. Not the multiplicity of communities. I guess what we have seen in some of the LTCCPs, what are community wants, to listen, the government should provide this this and this or the government shouldn't do this and this. (D4 central government regional)

And from this local government officer:

Forcing central government to participate has been good for the community. (K1 local government)

Other sectors

Most of our respondents had little to say about other participants' involvement in the process. There were distinct perceptions in some case study areas that diverse, minority and marginal groups such as migrants, refugees, aged, and youth had not been included in the process to the extent possible. It becomes difficult for people in the wider community to embrace a concept that is not known to them. There was also the belief that it is a challenge to get people interested when they already have very busy lives outside of formal community engagement practices:

Peoples' lives are becoming increasingly busy, short on time some people just genuinely do not care. As long as you don't impact on them directly, as long as they still turn on the tap water...the bulk of society are just happy to do their own thing. (L2 local government)

The four well-beings are seen in isolation as suggested here:

We met the business sector representatives and where they related to business that focused but the other perspectives was a challenge. (C4 local government)

The environmental sector in many case study areas was seen to be fully participative, but the business sector was not a part of the process to any great degree except in isolated council areas:

Certainly with the [place] process; they have a leaders forum that it is represented right across all the social sector plus all the well-beings including the business sector. (D5 central government regional)

The comment below indicates that while the business sector has not embraced the concept to any great degree that it is because they have not seen a place in the community outcomes process where they fit in. A widened knowledge of the concept within the overall community may help this misunderstanding to be overcome:

The business sector is I'd say fairly noticeable by their absence...Why would the businesses be there? How would you engage them? (E8 central government regional)

I don't think it's been embraced by the average citizen because I don't think that they know have a right or responsibility to participate. The four pillars, it is the one that gets the most attention in the local bodies is financial and the economic one. We have got to meet the dollars first and then we worry about the rest. (D2 elected member)

Various social service agencies did take part in the process, and there were suggestions from both within local authorities and the social sector that there has been a link which the community outcome process either created or enhanced:

Yeah reasonably well; we've kept them reasonably informed and because through the community services they're quite involved with Council to some degree. (M1 local government)

Social sectors seem very embracing of it. That's the one I'm most closely linked with. (B11 community representative)

While we acknowledge that Māori have not embraced the concept overall, this is often due to cultural misunderstandings such as:

Māori understood the process but only from the perspective of Māori which is understandable. (C4 local government)

But from a Māori participant's perspective:

The beauty of it all is that the pakeha too want the Māori people to understand how they live. This is great and it is how we are working now. And that's the balance again. The Treaty has been acknowledged and the people themselves, are starting to acknowledge the treaty too. (A11 iwi representative)

Capacity has been seen as big issue for Māori:

For Māori capacity has been an issue. (K1 local government)

7.7.3 Empowered local communities?

Several respondents considered the process has been an important opportunity for networking within their communities. It has helped to enrich the ways in which different organisations see where other organisations fit into the wider picture, not only in their operation on a day to day basis, but also how they fit into different aspects of community life:

Its empowered us because we talk more. And if we continue to have the workshops we will continue that discussion and if nothing else we just need to keep talking because eventually we'll stop overlapping services and that I think a key thing. (H2 community representative)

The process has also begun to help the community see the holistic aspects of working together and of how the silo mentality can be broken down. For example A10, a community worker who works with new migrants suggests that other organisations have become more aware of migrant needs because of the community outcomes process:

In the last year or so the climate for [place] has changed and people had more consideration for migrants and refugees and I think this was a really important net working process as well. (A10 community representative)

There is concern that there is not enough knowledge in the community about civic matters and this becomes evident every three years with the low turn-out for local government elections. Incorporating some form of civic understanding could assist communities to become more involved and to share the responsibility. For those who have taken part, there is a strong commitment to the common good and this could be extended. Currently, as suggested below, there is little knowledge, but also perhaps an apathy toward the community outcomes:

If you were to walk down the street and pick any 10th person and say do you know what you're community outcomes are and how being achieved they would look at you as if you had three heads. (C2 local government)

The proof of the pudding to some extent is yet to be seen and what it all leads to and how much communities are actually involved in the actions and processes and planning to realize the outcomes. (D5 central government regional)

At the end of the day it is enormously valuable for the public and if there was one thing I had to say it would be the process offers a lot for communities. (O2 community organisation representative)

Sometimes they feel as though they are sitting out there on their own and that's not true. You have to have the community plans and bring all these people in and suddenly they realize they are not on their own. (A11 iwi representative)

7.7.4 Commitment and capacity of community groups?

The number of people who took part in the process is evidence that there is some commitment in the community. It has not always been harnessed to its full potential by the various local authorities, however, as much of the wider public is still not aware of the part they can play in shared governance:

It varies like it does anywhere, the knowledge, understanding, capacity around issues that are important to communities. (L5 community representative)

The community needs someone to help them realize their capacity. (K1 local government)

I think it comes down to size, to the bigger you are and the more commitment and capacity you can choose to provide... (L2 local government)

The overall perception of our respondents is very well summed up by the comment below:

In terms of community engagement process it really does pose a big challenge to community members who have personal lives. (O3 community representative)

7.7.5 Empowered local government?

While there are many enthusiastic local authority staff who took part in the process there is still a perception that the community outcomes process is another compliance exercise and this limits empowerment. Local government needs the support of elected members and central government to become empowered:

Very limited; it becomes an exercise. At the end of the day you have to bung these in to the LTCCP; to what extent does this change things. Basically, as I see it, they just fit these into the new frameworks instead of saying here is the outcomes. Is anything being done differently? No. (A1 local government)

There was also consideration that the process enlightens local governments. It lets them know what is happening in the community:

For [...] Councils that had a narrow understanding of their role, this has certainly pushed out the boundaries and is useful and especially in the social well-being area. (D5 central government regional)

I think it has given them a stronger view of what's been happening out there (B1 local government)

7.7.6 Commitment and capacity of local government?

Although those who participated in the process were committed, and many larger council organisations had the capacity to facilitate a process which engaged a large part of their community, at a management level and elected member level the community outcomes process was often seen as a compliance exercise within many councils:

It was over managed but not giving dedicated time. (B3 local government)

It was felt by many respondents that the legislation demanded a high expectation of local authorities:

It's always a challenge to local government and councils to not take on too much. It all becomes unachievable. I think the challenge is to strategically focus on those key ones to bring about some key benefits. The commitment and the capacity is another thing and is tempered by the fact that they had to step back and make other choices in what they can and will not deliver on. (C4 local government)

That was something that the councils expressed concern about themselves that we've opened up this Pandora's box of expectations and that we've captured what people want but is there the rating base to sustain it. Some of the smaller councils I remember did express concerns about that and some of the big ones just said, 'Well there are so many demands on our resources that are we in fact going to be able to deliver on these aspirations and will people understand if we actually have to stage the deliver rather than producing everything they want right now' so I think that's sitting there as an issue for next time around as well. (E6 central government regional)

It was also understood that it is too early to understand whether the potential can be achieved and further review is required for this to be better understood:

You need to see the reporting on how the outcomes are tracking. You need to see behaviors around analyzing it and reviewing what it means. You need to see adjustments of how resourcing and activities based on what the outcomes look like... (B4 local government)

7.7.7 Marrying electoral and participatory democracy?

A difficulty with incorporating the community governance philosophy into the democratic system as we know it, is the misunderstanding amongst elected members of what community governance means. In the last section we identified that local authority staff had difficulty bringing elected members on board and while there have been clear moves in some of our case study areas the comments below indicate an unwillingness to change. While most of our respondents considered that the process was an opportunity for elected members to get to know the community, many elected members felt as though it disempowered them. Others were very keen to be part of the participation and saw it as an opportunity but felt disenfranchised by not being included in the process to the extent they considered could have been useful:

Councillors are elected to be representative and my role was usurped as an elected member. (C4 elected member)

I think they just see it as a nuisance; time and money. They say we could've told you about those sorts of problems. Not only is it not meaningful, it is not valued by a fair few of the elected members. (D2 elected member)

And from local authorities:

The elected members should take the lead as the citizens' voice. (B3 local government)

Both is better. (B4 local government)

Elected members have no say over adopting the community outcomes. To all intents and purposes I think they are and just another consultation group and they can contribute to them through their work in the organisation stands behind them. Some of them might see that as being disempowering, I don't know. (B1 local government)

A community representative had this to say:

I think it would be sad if elected members felt that way [disempowered]. It would be a golden opportunity to hear from different sectors in your community (H2 community representative)

7.7.8 Effective platform for collaboration amongst service providers?

It is imperative that the community engagement reflects the diversity of the community's values and aspirations based on an informed understanding by communities of the contextual issues for well-being to occur. This needs to take into account the diversity of the population in a territorial jurisdiction, a challenge in itself as territorial authorities differ so much from one place to another as does the population within that jurisdiction. There are significant challenges facing local government in getting community buy-in and without buy-in the legitimacy of any outcomes or plan may well be contested. Government institutions, including local government, have to consider where their responsibility lies and the community outcomes can be seen as an overarching umbrella for decision-making:

Not so much the identification process, but potentially implementing projects over time that are aligned with the outcomes and particularly those big government departments, health and social organisations do see (and I know public health in particular) do see their aims and goals being expressed through the community outcomes process. So it's a really good example of collaboration in a positive way and a platform for joint projects and they are happening. (A1 local government)

Prior to that we were talking just outcomes, that didn't get too much traction from service providers but once you start getting down to measures they understood the respective contributions and how they could contribute whereas at that community outcomes level it is too amorphous. (C4 local government)

I think it enhances it and that's from a networking point of view but in terms of service providers in our sector it's already happened. So we've actually worked really hard to make sure it does happen so it just enhances it. (H2 community representative)

7.7.9 Improved community well-being - value for money?

It was apparent throughout the interviews that all sectors struggled to resource their participation in the community outcomes process. In consequence, nearly all respondents felt that lack of resources meant they could not do justice to the community outcomes process. As one respondent said about value for money:

No, and I hope we never do it again. (H4 elected member)

In looking at the question more holistically, one poorly resourced respondent remarked:

I guess in a positive statement the community outcomes have not been compartmentalized into an environment, economic, social and cultural. The community outcomes have tried to read it together. Some of the community outcomes have that cross over. That's a positive. (B10 community representative)

7.7.10 Conclusions on governance value added

Our respondents considered whether the community outcomes identification process does add value in terms of the two objectives of the LGA; that is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of communities and to promote the social, economic,

environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. From the discussions with our respondents it is concluded that while it was recognized that there is potential for the community governance to enhance the democratic decision-making process in meeting the objectives of the LGA and to realize the well-beings of communities, the first round of community outcomes processes has failed to fully capture that potential. Through further deliberation, understanding and commitment along with increased capacity this should improve in the future. Tracking and reporting indicators toward outcomes may help bring communities toward closer collaboration.

A Deliberative Engagement Process Framework for Identifying Community Outcomes

8.1 Introduction

In this section we develop a framework for identifying community outcomes. We do this by drawing on our: review of recent international and New Zealand literatures (Scott, 1998; Carson, 1999 and 2001; Fung and Wright, 2003; *KnowHow Guide*, 2003; Burke, 2004; Future Taranaki, 2004; McKinlay and Douglas, 2004; Cavaye, 2005; van Bueren and ten Heuvelhof, 2005; Blair and Murphy-Greene, 2006; Johnson and Cameron, 2006; Johnston, et al., 2006; Nash, 2007; Thomas and Memon, 2007; Future Waikato (undated); Forgie and Richardson, (undated); preliminary findings of the LTCCP base-line survey (Borrie and Memon, 2005); analysis of the LGA (Section 3); and in-depth interviews with participants (Section 7).

The framework is generic and can, therefore, be adapted to suit the circumstances of any local authority, depending on its capacity and needs. Contiguous local authorities within a region or a sub-region could also use the framework when collaborating on the community outcomes process.

8.2 Six-Step Generic Framework

The six sequential steps in the deliberative community engagement process encapsulated in Figure 8.1 on page 100 includes: meta-planning; extensive public engagement; creating draft community outcomes; reviewing draft and prioritising community outcomes; finalising outcomes; and circulating outcomes and initiating implementation. Each step is explained in turn below.

Step 1: Meta-planning (planning to plan)

There are five key aspects to this meta-planning phase:

- set up a Community Outcomes Process steering committee;
- appoint a Community Outcomes Process facilitator;
- develop a strategy for undertaking deliberative community-wide inclusive engagement;
- develop a Community Outcomes Process information management strategy; and
- prepare an issues and options scoping report to contextualize the deliberations for identifying potential outcomes.

First, it is proposed that a focus group convened by the council should decide on the composition of the steering committee to guide the community outcomes identification process. The steering committee should comprise a variety of stakeholders and individuals drawn from

the civic society, local authority and central government agencies, and iwi, business, farming and education leaders. According to Johnson and Cameron (2006:14), “When the initiative involves potentially significant effects for a wider group of stakeholders, more people should be involved.” Some things to be considered in this respect are: resources required, knowledge and capacity of those involved, and relationships that already exist between different groups. The steering committee would guarantee depth of diversity in the process. We suggest that the steering committee be chaired by a senior council officer, in order to ensure sustained links with local government. Some steering committees may decide on a different chair, but they would need to ensure that they have close access to a senior local authority officer.

Second, the process facilitator is appointed by the steering committee. The facilitator should have the ability to foster deliberative engagement as well as manage group dynamics and maintain neutrality (Carson, 2001). Only authentic dialogue will bring results and some suggest that it will require an experienced facilitator for this to happen (Innes and Booher, 2003:37).

Third, a process engagement strategy should be developed to guide the steering committee through the steps needed to ensure that all parts of the process are in place. The ability of the facilitator to promote authentic dialogue amongst diverse and interdependent groups and individuals will mean that reciprocal relations will grow and continue to build up. New relationships will form and, because of the authenticity of the dialogue, these will be valued by participants. Learning will occur as it will not be seen as an exercise controlled by a few. Trust will have formed and it will develop creativity as people’s ideas are acknowledged. All this will contribute to social and cognitive learning.

Fourth, an information management strategy should be developed. All information should be shared with the wider community, using multiple channels of information sharing. We suggest that an independent COP website be set up at this stage and kept up-to-date on an ongoing basis to ensure the process maintains transparency in its different phases and is accessible to others. The mailing list should include a wide range of interest-based and place-based communities of interest and stakeholder organisations.

Last, preparation of an issues and options report is proposed to complete Step 1 of the process. We suggest that this report should reflect input from a wide selection of stakeholders, such as local authorities, central government agencies, iwi, non-government organisations, and local tertiary institutes in the district or region. This scoping report will lay the substantive basis for informed deliberative engagement with the wider community and stakeholders commencing in Step 2. Information from the scoping report should be disseminated to the wider community and stakeholder organisations.

Community outcomes should be based on concerns and priorities related to the current or future social, economic, environmental or cultural well-being of the community. The issues and options scoping report will ensure that a preliminary list of issues of concern to the community, as well as particular stakeholder groups, and their aspirations and expectations are identified based on an informed assessment of the situation within the geographical jurisdiction of the local authority. The scoping report can also provide an overview of how activities of local and central government agencies and other service providers in the district or region can contribute to community well-being. This means there is something ‘concrete’ when the engagement process commences within the wider community. If the engagement process starts with a clean slate there may be insufficient knowledge and understanding for meaningful deliberation and open dialogue contextually grounded in the locality or region. This may lead to very generic, high level outcomes

DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY OUTCOMES PROCESS

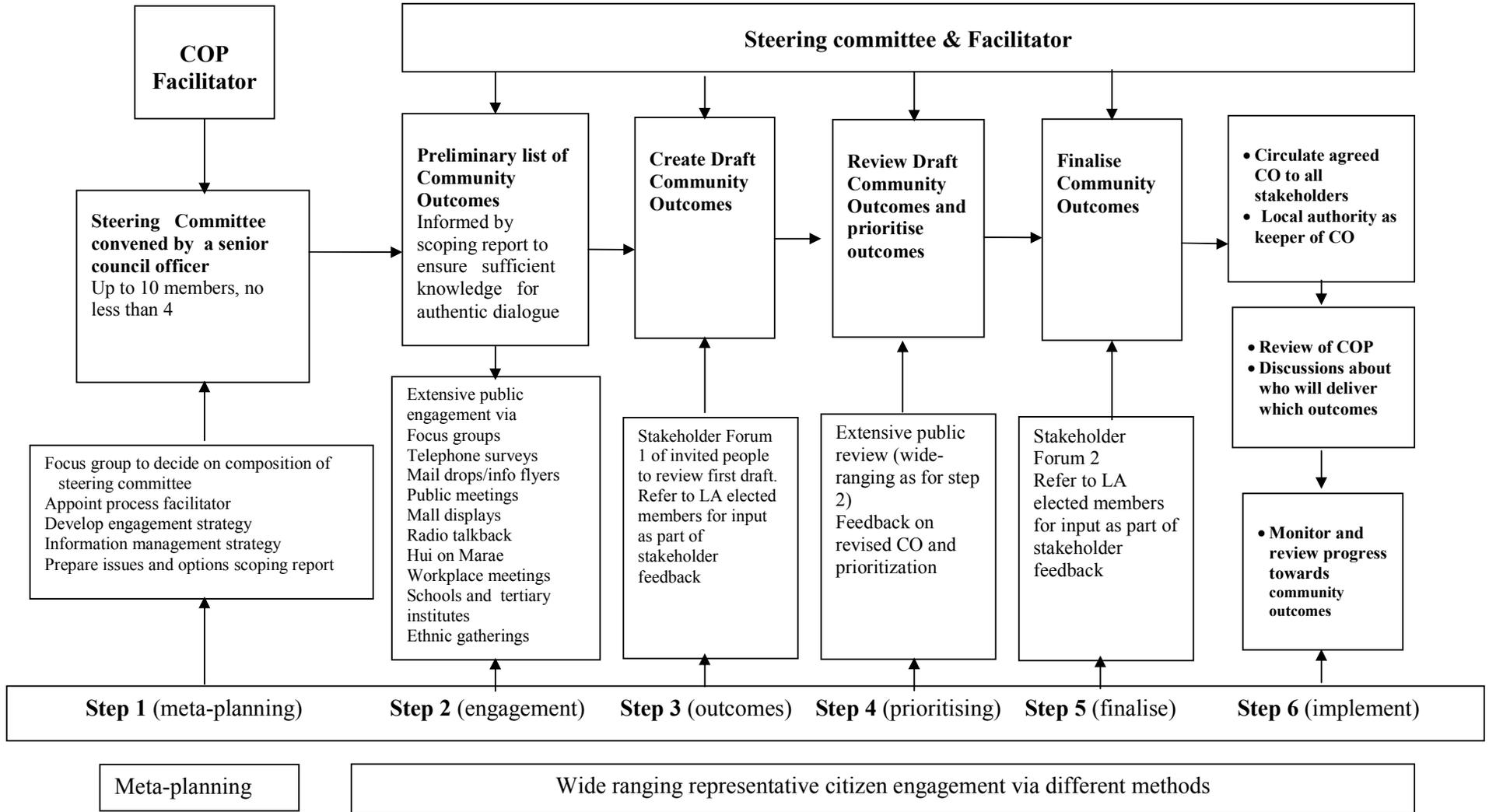


Figure 8.1 A deliberative engagement process design framework for identifying community outcomes processes

Step 2: Extensive Public Engagement

The steering committee should undertake extensive public engagement within diverse communities to elicit feedback using a range of methods. Some ways in which engagement could occur are listed below.

- focus groups
- telephone surveys
- e- government
- mail drops
- information flyers
- public meetings
- mall displays
- radio talkback
- hui on marae
- workplace meetings
- schools and tertiary institutions
- ethnic minority community gatherings

There is no one way to reach out to the public to ensure inclusion within diverse communities. An effort should be made to reach out to marginal groups e.g., some women, Māori, ethnic minorities, older and younger people, and those who cannot read or write.²¹ Several different methods are needed to ensure inclusiveness across the groups. During the process, reviewing and adapting methods for a particular sector of the community may be required.

Scott (1998: 299) suggests there needs to be an emphasis on civic knowledge for individual participants to engage effectively. Genuine engagement can only happen if citizens are informed fully of the reasons for engagement as it is through understanding that people will feel more interested in taking part and meaningful deliberation can take place, which Fung and Wright (2005) consider necessary for community empowerment. Johnson and Cameron (2006) suggest it is necessary to develop public understanding on:

- the decision-making process;
- the issues;
- its (the public's) role in the decision-making process;
- how it might be affected by the decision/s;
- alternatives and trade-offs;
- any decisions and the rationale for them.

The process of public engagement will elicit a range of views on issues and their relative significance. This data should be reviewed to identify areas of consensus as well as areas where there are differences in perspectives.

Step 3: Creating the Draft Community Outcomes

Once public views have been canvassed, the steering committee will then need to develop a draft list of Community Outcomes. Care should be exercised in framing the outcome statements. It is useful for the outcome statements to be framed in relatively specific terms, in order for outcomes to meaningfully inform selection of priorities by local and central government agencies as service providers. Very general, high-level and all-inclusive outcome statements may make useful vision statements, but are not deemed sufficient to meet this requirement for

²¹ Fung and Wright (2005) point out the fundamental condition of poor literacy is a major obstacle to empowerment of whole communities in western societies.

decision-making (SSC, 2007). Unambiguous outcome statements are also necessary, in order to specify how local and central government will be able to judge their respective successes within the chosen planning period and their contribution to community outcomes. (See boxed insert next page for a selection of community outcomes taken at random from the LTCCPs of several councils.)

The draft list of community outcomes should also indicate a sense of relative priorities if possible.²² This information is useful to local authorities, central government and other service providers to determine their strategic priorities.

A significant part of this step is a public stakeholder forum of invited people to further deliberate on the draft outcomes, which we identify as Stakeholder Forum 1 in Figure 6.1. The forum should be designed to seek input by participants carefully chosen from a range of backgrounds and experiences, including: civic society; local authorities; central government agencies; iwi and other Māori groups; non-government organisations; tertiary institutions; and business and farming sectors; amongst others. Deliberations should be open and honest and areas of agreement as well as disagreement should be noted.

The process will work best with the understanding and commitment of key forum participants. Hence, appropriate information should be provided to forum participants to facilitate this.

Step 4: Reviewing draft community outcomes and prioritizing outcomes

It is in this Step 4 that a second round of public engagement will ensure that the wider community has an added opportunity to be involved in discussions and feedback so that the draft outcomes can be reviewed and finalized in a transparent fashion. Transparency is important in order for the public to know that the outcomes are theirs, to embrace them, and take collective ownership as a community. Ensuring as much diversity and inclusion as possible by participants will involve the wide-ranging ‘reaching out’ to the community as in Step 2.

There may also be consideration at this stage of prioritization of outcomes. Once again, open debate should be encouraged to elicit different perspectives.

This may be an appropriate point to also commence conversations regarding choice of indicators and monitoring and reporting frameworks as discussed in Johnston and Memon (2008, PUCM LGA Report 4). Larger councils may wish to do this as a separate, related exercise. Community engagement in choice of indicators for the outcomes is important in terms of enhancing public understanding of how progress towards meeting outcomes may be judged.

Step 5: Finalise Outcomes

We recommend that the steering committee organise a further stakeholder forum (Stakeholder Forum 2) to finalise the community outcomes. By this point, forum members, will have worked and interacted sufficiently to understand each other and have trust in the process and in other actors taking part. In conjunction with the proposed forum, elected local authority members may be asked for their input to the finalized outcomes. The outcomes belong to the community, and not to the Council or any one stakeholder or group of stakeholders. Councillors need to acknowledge that community outcomes are owned by the community; they can have their input

²² Inevitably, there will be differences of opinion over prioritising draft outcomes, but it is imperative that differences be openly discussed and agreement reached in a transparent fashion using appropriate methods of conflict resolution.

as part of the stakeholder group, but as Council are not authorized to change the finalised outcomes.

Examples of Community Outcome Statements

A selection of community outcome statements is listed below. The small sample is indicative of the range of community outcome statements across the country in different territorial and regional authorities. They are broad, high-level statements that reflect the long-term desires of a local community to ensure the well-being of the community. The aim here is to show what community outcomes are rather than comment on their quality, including ability to be measured as achievable outcomes.

“Aucklanders have access to a range of affordable and safe ways to move people and goods” (Auckland Regional Council)

“A sustainable community that respects the environment: Communities that appreciate our environmental resources and are committed to planning for their future use.” (Buller District Council)

“A Well-Governed City: Our values and idea are reflected in the actions of our decision-makers. Our decision-makers manage public funds responsibly, respond to current needs and plan for the future.” (Christchurch City Council)

“Kind, healthy people: We are part of a welcoming, safe, inclusive and healthy community” (Nelson City Council)

“Fostering involvement in arts and recreation: The District has well developed and maintained centres for arts and recreation activities” (Papakura District Council)

“Education and training opportunities for all” (Whakatane District Council)

Step 6: Circulate and initiate process of implementation

There are five facets to the final step of the community outcomes process:

- local authority acknowledges the final community outcomes and affirms its role as the “keeper of the outcomes” on behalf of the community;
- final community outcomes are circulated to all stakeholders and other interested parties, published in local newspapers, and posted on the COP and Council websites;
- local authority initiates inter-organisational strategic planning discussions with central government and other service providers as to who will do what to make progress towards outcomes;
- commence preparation of the LTCCP as a strategic planning process is commenced to decide what should be done and by whom, i.e., how to make progress towards desired outcomes; and
- monitor and report on progress towards achieving community outcomes.

The community outcomes become statements which reflect the aims and aspirations of the community for the following 10 years. The dialogue and decision-making processes involved in identifying community outcomes will help all those involved to continue to work together toward their common goals. The process will continue through monitoring and reporting of the indicators toward achieving the outcomes. Additional outcomes may be identified through community consultation by the local authority as important to the current or future social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the community.

Main Findings and Recommendations: Harnessing the Potential of Community Outcome Processes as a Forum for Community Governance

9.1 Introduction

Research objective one in the *Planning and Governance Under the LGA* project was to develop a methodology to evaluate the LGA community outcomes processes and the related monitoring and reporting frameworks and apply it to selected councils.

As explained earlier, for sake of convenience, the findings from this objective are being reported as two complementary streams of work. The focus of this research report is on community outcomes processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs as a forum for community governance, as a pivotal part of the ‘whole-of-government’ strategic planning framework embedded in the LGA. The focus of the second report is on how local authorities have interpreted their LGA mandate to develop indicators and monitoring and reporting regimes to track progress towards community outcomes (Johnston and Memon, 2008).

The research question addressed in this report was as follows: *How effective have community outcomes processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs been as a forum for community governance in the context of the strategic planning paradigm embedded in the LGA?* This research question was addressed using a multi-pronged, multi-scalar analytical approach, as follows:

The community governance mandate in the LGA and related policy underpinnings of the Act pertinent to community engagement²³ were analysed from a conceptual perspective by drawing on recent wide ranging literatures on governance, well-being, sustainable development, community engagement and design principles for facilitating community engagement. The findings of this analysis were presented in Sections 2 and 3 of the report.

The provisions in the LGA relating to the purpose for, and process of, identifying community outcomes and obligations to report against community outcomes were analysed in the wider context of the strategic planning, decision-making, and accountability provisions contained in Part 6 of the Act and the findings presented in Section 4. Also included was an overview of provisions in the *Public Finance Act* (2004) for strategic planning as part of the current *Managing for Outcomes/Objectives* initiative in the State sector as a comparison.

²³ Community outcomes processes are an exercise in community engagement.

The next stage in the study methodology was to undertake a LTCCP base-line survey of all local authorities in New Zealand in late 2004. It was designed to gain an overview of how the process of preparing first generation LTCCPs was beginning to unfold in regions and districts from the perspective of staff in local authorities with particular reference to facilitating community outcomes processes and to identifying issues and concerns they had relating to this task. A summary of findings was provided in Section 5.

The final methodological stage was to identify criteria to use in evaluating the quality of community outcomes processes from the perspectives of participants in the first generation community of outcomes processes in 10 case study local authorities. The criteria for judging the quality of community outcomes processes were presented in Section 6 in this report along with the field methods. The findings from the in-depth interviews that resulted were reported in Sections 7. Building on what had gone before we then developed in Section 8 a generic deliberative engagement framework for use in facilitating community outcomes processes.

Finally, in this Section 9, we summarise the main findings on the effectiveness of community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance and then propose a set of recommendations to Government and its agencies for enhancing the process, and to local government, for their consideration.

9.2 The Broader Institutional Context for Community Outcomes Processes

In order to assess how effective community outcomes processes facilitated by local authorities for first generation LTCCPs have been as a forum for community governance in the context of the strategic planning paradigm embedded in the LGA, it is important to understand the broader institutional context for community outcomes processes. This assessment was done in Part A of the report from three perspectives: theoretical, constitutional, and legislative. These broader level contextual constraints cascade down the scale to community outcome process practices at ground level.

From a theoretical perspective, the literature raised more questions than answers over the potential for community governance in Western democracies, yet did provide useful guidance for institutional design properties for facilitating deliberative community engagement.

From a constitutional perspective, the community governance mandate in the LGA is constrained to the extent that, within the framework of a unitary state, local government is central government's agent, not an autonomous partner. On the one hand, central government is accountable to Parliament and has historically maintained a distance from local government and demonstrated a benign disinterest in what local government does. On the other hand, central government is the major service provider in New Zealand and is the dominant policy partner in its relationship with local government. Notwithstanding these contradictions, we argued that the community governance mandate in the LGA (2002) provides a clear opportunity for intergovernmental collaboration in community engagement to an extent not previously witnessed in New Zealand. The Third Way post-1999 Labour coalition governments have been keen to forge stronger links with communities and improve inter-governmental relationships for political and pragmatic reasons.

There were also constraints on the effectiveness of first generation community outcome processes stemming from the way the provisions relating to community outcome processes are

framed in the Act, and how these have been interpreted and implemented by local and central government. The LGA (2002) mandates local authorities to facilitate deliberative community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance and central government departments are expected to contribute to this process. As design properties, procedural requirements in the Act on the role of local authorities in facilitating a community outcomes identification process, are, however, limited in scope. This is because the process for developing community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of a district or region set out in the LGA gives local authorities discretion to facilitate a process appropriate to their particular circumstances. As well, central government provided limited guidance to assist local authorities in this respect for first generation LTCCPs. While flexibility for designing community outcomes processes might well be desirable, a lack of adequate understanding of, and strong advocacy by, central and local government implementing agencies of the significance of the community outcomes process as a pivotal part of the community governance mandate of the Act limits the potential of the community outcomes process as a forum for community governance. Findings from our empirical cases clearly show this to be the case. As well, inadequate procedural guidance is reflected in community outcome statements which are framed as generic, high level aspirations and thus not very useful in providing guidance for collective decision-making and action.

A notable omission in the strategic planning logic model in the LGA is local authority outcomes. Conceptually, local authority outcomes are similar to central government departmental outcomes and both are intended to contribute to community outcomes.

Related to the above concern, it is also not yet clear how the outcomes-focussed strategic planning regime introduced for the State sector (central government departments) 2 years after the LGA via the *Public Finance Amendment Act* (2004) and the *Crown Entities Act* (2004) will interface with the local government community outcomes-focussed strategic planning regime. The way the relationship evolves between these two parallel planning regimes will have implications for the role of central government departments in community outcomes processes and the extent to which central government departments will collaborate with local government to respond to community outcomes within a 'whole-of-government' planning paradigm. These concerns reflect the constitutional constraints referred to earlier.

9.3 Process for Identification of Outcomes

The processes for identification of community outcomes were evaluated in Part B of this study. Our overall intent was to assess the extent to which the shift from local government to local governance was reflected in the perceptions and understandings of those who had participated in community outcome processes. A national base-line survey of local authorities was undertaken in late 2004 (2 years after the LGA was enacted) with particular reference to community outcome processes, in order to highlight emerging issues and concerns. Subsequently, an evaluation of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance was undertaken in 2006. It was based on the six criteria developed in Section 6.3:

1. Social inclusiveness
2. Role of local authority as facilitator
3. Integrating electoral and participatory democracy
4. Social learning
5. Sustainable development
6. Added value in terms of the Act

Main findings pertinent to these criteria are summarised in turn below.

9.3.1 Inclusiveness

One of the key underpinnings of participative democracy in the context of the community outcomes process is that the LGA has mandated the process to be facilitated by local government for and on behalf of their local communities. The first part of our semi-structured interviews related to the *inclusiveness* of community outcomes processes from a number of perspectives, including how it was perceived by the various actors and to what extent the methods used to facilitate the process enabled a participative democracy stance. We asked the respondents the extent to which they were included in the process, whether this was appropriate and what barriers there were to participation. We also asked our respondents to consider whether elected member participation was detrimental or beneficial to the process and the extent of benefits and limitations of the process.

As much as there was a diverse range of views from key actor groups, there was also a diverse range of views from individuals within key actor groups. There are no discernable patterns, either in terms of type or population size of local authorities. As Johnston, et al. (2005) suggest in their study, diversity in perspectives of participants is likely, as the concept behind community governance is that community outcome processes should reflect a community's contextual social setting in terms of diversity and perceived needs.

Table 9.1 gives a synopsis of the extent to which the six steps in our proposed framework for deliberative engagement in the community outcomes process were undertaken inclusively in each of the 10 council areas in this study.

Table 9.1 Extent of inclusive engagement during six steps in the community outcomes process²⁴

Councils	Six Steps in Framework for Community Engagement					
	1. Set up process	2. Engage with communities	3. Create draft outcomes	4. Public review and prioritizing	5. Finalise outcomes	6. Adopt and review progress
1	X	X	X	X	X	X
2		X	X	X		X
3		X	X			
4		X	X			
5	X	X	X		X	
6		X		X		
7		X	X		X	
8		X	X	X	X	X
9		X	X			X
10		X				

With one notable exception, councils facilitated first generation community outcome processes using comparable approaches, but with some significant omissions. These omissions were primarily at the front-end and the tail-end of the six-step process. Steps 2 and 3 were those in which most public engagement took place, but this was not always followed throughout the rest of the process and the outcomes statements were often finalized in-house by council staff with no review opportunity offered to the stakeholders or the wider community.

²⁴ Numbering of councils is random.

9.3.2 Role of local government as a facilitator

The *Local Government Act* (2002) requires local authorities to “carry out” a community outcomes identification process, and also to encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. An important question is how and to what extent local authorities have balanced these two potentially competing requirements during the course of the community outcome process.

To address this question, we explored with our respondents different aspects of the community outcomes process as a forum for deliberative engagement, to develop an understanding of how the process of facilitation carried out by local authorities enabled a meaningful process to be undertaken. Understanding whether the local authority had the trust of participants from the outset or whether this developed over time was our first question. We then went on to ask how much background information should be given to participants to enable them to take part in the process, whether local authorities should take a managerial role or be more hands-off allowing the participants to manage the process and whether the process should be facilitated by local authority in-house staff or an independent facilitator. Finally, we asked respondents to consider whether any participants dominated the process and lastly if the process resulted in aspirations reflective of the community or council.

Our observations about shortcomings in local authority *facilitation* of the process are:

- Step 1 meta-planning for identifying community outcomes was a stumbling block for most case study areas in view of lack of policy direction. Except in two of the 10 cases, there was limited non-council input into the planning of the process, including lack of community input. For most, the planning was done primarily as a local authority exercise, with limited input in some instances from central government. But the wider community and Māori were not brought into the process until Step 2.
- The background material provided by local authorities to participants in the form of a scoping report of issues and options in the community was of limited value with a few notable exceptions.
- It did not appear to matter whether the facilitator was a professional consultant or a council staff member. Ability to provide leadership and create trust was more important than status.
- Steering committees were usually formed once the process had begun. Having not done the planning at the community level, the opportunity for reaching wide into the community may have been lost and there were some instances where this did appear to happen. Others who made the Step 2 work well, did so because the council staff worked extremely hard to draw the community into the process. In the majority of councils, several methods were used to include community, but did not go widely enough to reach a full diversity of people. Lack of resources and time were major constraints.
- Step 3 (preparing draft outcomes statements) was usually done by the steering committee or in some cases with key stakeholder groups. There were cases where the draft outcome statements were done at local authority level as they considered they were the best placed to write the outcomes.
- Step 4 to give stakeholders and the wider community opportunity for reviewing draft outcomes was either missing or poorly handled in almost all case studies. This is a crucial step if community outcomes are to be community owned.
- Step 5 is to allow the community to sign off the outcomes. This is not the role of Council, although in several case studies it was perceived as such. Community agreement was not sought for final outcome statements; with council signing off the outcomes rather than community signing off.

- Step 6 is important to inform the public of the outcomes have been finalized, but it is also important to continue the process of developing indicators and monitoring and reporting frameworks in order to work toward the outcomes²⁵. This is not solely a local authority role and should be shared by all stakeholders including the input of community.
- Few councils had invested effort in developing indicators and monitoring and reporting frameworks for tracking progress to community outcomes. Most ran out of time.
- The significance of community input in developing indicators and monitoring and reporting frameworks is not commonly appreciated.
- Few councils appreciated the role of council as a keeper of community outcomes.
- Community outcome statements are accessible from local authority websites, but with varying degrees of ease.

Local authorities must balance the requirements of carrying out a community outcomes identification process and encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. Tensions are reflected in how local authorities have facilitated community outcomes processes. Local authority staff who design and manage community outcomes processes have to walk a fine line in this respect. From a pragmatic efficiency point of view they need to ensure that a community outcomes process is completed in time for the preparation for the LTCCP. But at the same time, they need to be cognizant of the importance of respecting the intrinsic integrity of the community outcomes process as an exercise in deliberative engagement.

9.3.3 Integrating electoral and participatory democracy

One of the purposes of local government as stated in the LGA is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities. The Act anticipates a shift to a more participatory democratic model. How realistic are the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach in the context of the community outcomes processes?

We considered the extent to which the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach to community outcomes processes are realistic. We wanted to know whether participants were motivated by promoting public good, and the extent to which they were open to understanding of others' points of views and were able to empathise with them. We also considered it important to know whether respondents felt that they were given the opportunity to engage in discussion to be able to share their knowledge and perceptions. They were also asked to reflect on whether trust between participants increased as the process progressed and also whether trust in the process progressed during the deliberations.

A shift to a model of community governance in the LGA is based on a number of assumptions. When asked to reflect on this, respondents perceived themselves as being involved in the community outcomes process primarily for the common good. However, they are realistic and pragmatic and are cognizant of the nature of the ways of interest based democracies. They are also aware of other constraints on participatory democracy including lack of accessibility, willingness to listen to views of others, trust and public apathy. The possibilities of community governance would be extended, if local authorities 'let go the reins' and included the community in the decision-making processes.

9.3.4 Social learning

One of the benefits often attributed to community participation in democratic processes is that it enables cognitive and social learning to take place. This raises questions such as to what extent

²⁵ See our second accompanying report Johnston and Memon (2008).

the community outcomes identification processes have facilitated and enhanced cognitive & social learning? Have actors collectively learned about the issues that have emerged through the process? Have actors learned from and about each other resulting in new understandings and new ways of viewing issues?

Deliberative engagement helps those involved to increase their understandings of the multitude of issues that are involved in community governance and leads to satisfaction with resultant outcomes. Including a diversity of people in decision-making gives more opportunities for debate as to process issues that may not be considered in a narrower consultation model. We analysed the respondents' views on how the process contributed to increased levels of common understanding of community issues and aspirations, including Māori interests. We also ascertained the extent to which the process resulted in a sharing and commitment to community outcomes and whether the respondents or their organisations personally learned anything new from the process. Most discussion with respondents focused around what people learnt from each other (social learning) and little of it was on how much self-awareness changed (cognitive learning), although in practice it is difficult to distinguish between the two.

For respondents participating extensively in community outcomes processes there was a clear feeling there had been significant social learning. This was largely confined to steering groups and similar working groups, which met on a regular basis over a period of time. Participants almost without exception reported much improved new understanding of other organisations. There was a clear correlation between the time spent together working through complex issues, including consultation design, and the level of new learning which resulted.

The discussion with respondents relating to the social learning criterion identifies that there is much to be learned through people getting together and discussing issues that affect well-being in their community. There was an overall positive response to learning from each other and this will help to build social capital, especially if the networking processes are continued, a necessary part of institutional change. There was mixed enthusiasm about the concept of sharing responsibility and as has been the case throughout the analysis of the data, the understanding that shared governance is a responsibility for all has been overlooked. The opportunities for public decision-making to be an interactive process that involves multiple actors from government and community (including the business sector) is yet to be realized. Social learning has further potential to increase awareness of this LGA objective.

9.3.5 Sustainable development

One of the purposes of the LGA is to provide for local authorities to play a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural-well being of communities by taking a sustainable development approach (LGA, Section 14). This raises the question: have the community outcomes processes been informed by sustainability approaches and to what extent? The findings below focus on the extent to which respondents felt a sustainable development approach was reflected in the community outcomes processes.

Our interviews suggest that the community outcomes processes were not generally informed by sustainable development approaches and discussions were not always focused around this and associated concepts. Thus, understanding of what a sustainable development approach to the community outcomes process means was limited. Most respondents considered they personally knew what it meant to take a sustainable development approach, some of whom were positive about the way discussions started to broaden thinking about sustainability concepts. Criticism of local government not working toward sustainability also demonstrated that those who took part

in the process did not come to clear understandings of sustainable development. There was also concern from within the community, from Māori, and from a few at local authority level, that central government needs to consider sustainable communities in their policy decisions.

9.3.6 Added value to democratic local governance

The purpose of local government stated in the LGA, is: a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future. The question raised is to what degree has the community outcomes identification exercise added value in terms of these two objectives of the Act?

The LGA is a legislative instrument for community governance. The community outcomes process is expected to be the catalyst to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities and to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. We identified ways in which respondents considered the community outcomes process to have added value in terms of the intent of the Act and whether the participatory governance model advocated for decision-making within local communities had become a recognizable platform for sustainable development. Even though the potential has not been fully realised, the community outcomes process does have the potential to add greater value to community policies and decisions as it matures. Opportunities for carrying out a form of community governance provide a platform to bring people in the communities together.

Our respondents considered whether the community outcomes identification process adds value in terms of the two purposes of the LGA: to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of communities; and to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. From the discussions with our respondents it is concluded that while it was recognized that there is potential for the community governance to enhance the democratic decision-making process in meeting the objectives of the LGA and to realize the well-beings of communities, the first round of community outcomes processes has failed to fully capture that potential. Through further deliberation, understanding and commitment along with increased capacity this should improve in the future. Tracking and reporting indicators toward outcomes may help bring communities toward closer collaboration.

9.4 Discussion

We have argued in this study that the paradigm of community governance in the LGA constitutes a significantly new approach to local government; not just a new function of local government. The objective of developing the framework discussed in Section 8 (Figure 8.1) and based on design properties for community engagement discussed in the literature review, was to facilitate informed deliberative engagement in an inclusive manner in diverse communities. Informed, deliberative, and inclusive engagement is imperative for the success of a community outcomes process as a forum for community governance. There is significant danger of local authority members and senior staff seeing the community outcomes process as a one-off requirement and giving it low profile in the local government setting.

Based on the analysis of the broader context in *Part A* of the report and the interrogation of experiences and perceptions of community outcomes process participants in *Part B* of the report, we have learned that communities have failed to fully grasp the opportunity that informed,

deliberative, community based engagement offers as a forum for community governance mandated under the LGA. The first generation community outcome processes were undertaken on an institutional landscape that was less than ideal. A few local authorities did not undertake discrete outcome processes for the 2006 LTCCPs and instead, they adapted sets of outcomes from previous consultations. There was confusion stemming from lack of policy direction or guidance regarding matters such as prioritisation of outcomes or whether local authorities could add to the list of community outcomes and the relationship between community outcomes and council outcomes. There were tensions between contiguous local authorities when deciding if it was appropriate to collaborate and the relationship between regional outcomes and territorial outcomes. There were concerns that councils were being, yet again, forced to undertake an unfunded mandate when the outcomes belonged to the community, and not to the council. The matter of central government departmental input was left largely to individual departments and officers.

The challenge for harnessing the potential of the community governance mandate in the LGA via community outcomes processes is to understand that the community is a site for mediating structures that intervene between the domain of everyday life of individuals and the larger socio-economic and political context for political activity. It is through the citizenry that the aspirations and needs of diverse communities can be understood. A sustainable development approach to achieve community well-being needs the voices of all sectors of society to be engaged in open dialogue as making collective decisions via channels of electoral democracy in the local government or central government arena has not proved adequate on its own. This attests to the significance of the community outcomes process as a forum for community governance in the context of the outcomes-focused, 'whole-of-government' strategic planning framework embedded in the LGA. Failure to accord sufficient cognizance to this in designing and undertaking community outcome processes has been a further barrier in harnessing the potential of the Act to open up a window of opportunity for invigorating local democracy in New Zealand.

A process of deliberative engagement also needs to be an informed one and cannot happen on a clean slate. Participants should have an adequate understanding of the contextual setting for the community outcomes process. This includes an understanding of the purpose of the process, the role of participants, as well as an appreciation of substantive issues in the community. This was achieved to varying degrees by participants in community outcome processes.

Overall, participation in community outcome processes aided social learning. Groups of people who did meet and deliberate opened up a chance for further dialogue amongst service providers, other stakeholders and the wider community. This will potentially have longer term benefits for communities where this did happen and will also raise recognition within local and central government agencies that they really do need to do better in recognising diversity and being socially inclusive. How central and local government and other stakeholders can go about achieving this is by ensuring that understanding of the community governance paradigm in the Act is enhanced both within central and local government spheres and within the wider community. In the local government setting, it is very important to have elected members and senior management staff more knowledgeable about the community governance mandate enshrined in the Act. They need to embrace the spirit and purpose of community governance rather than see it as a one off function of local government and possibly a threat to their roles.

Local authority staff who facilitated first generation community outcomes processes enthusiastically took part in our study. They were very helpful in giving overviews of the way the process worked in their authorities and sharing their opinions of the effectiveness of the process. Many of them were in an invidious situation as they had to facilitate a relatively novel

participatory process that was significantly different in its intent from the conventional model of public participation in local government. Some of them were given little support by local government elected members and senior staff who treated this process as a compliance exercise. The study findings reveal that in the local government sector, old ways are hard to break and that institutional change will not occur overnight. There was also relatively limited guidance available to local authorities from central government to facilitate first generation outcomes processes, apart from the *KnowHow Guides*.

Elected members can help bring the community outcomes process to the community. The interviews revealed there was strong commitment from some elected members and very little from others. The latter considered it to be a waste of rate payers' money for yet another initiative that was forced upon them by central government without funding support. They also argued that it was their role, as elected members, to represent citizens and as such be the spokesperson for their community.

A small minority of other participants in community outcomes processes questioned the legitimacy of elected members being permitted to participate in outcomes processes, but this was not a widely shared concern. The community outcomes process is an opportunity for elected members to acquire a greater understanding of the community's aspirations and they could assist in drawing people from their community into the process. The role of council in the community outcomes process is one of working in collaboration with other stakeholders to facilitate deliberative community engagement and as part of the community they represent they can contribute by providing feedback on draft and final outcomes.

In terms of participation by central government, a major constraint on first generation community outcomes processes was the constitutional relationship of local government to central government. Local government is an agent of central government, not an autonomous partner. Essentially, it was left to individual central government departments to decide their level of participation in community outcomes processes, with some encouragement from central government to do so.

Central government agencies took part in the process primarily at the regional level. The interviews with regional office staff revealed a close connection with communities in some local authority areas and in some agencies, particularly the social service agencies. The level of understanding and commitment to community outcomes processes appeared to depend on the personalities of individuals in regional offices as much as who they worked for. A few central government agencies enthusiastically responded to the opportunity to become participants in the community outcomes process while others did not see themselves having a role because they saw it as a local authority responsibility and took part only if they were invited.

A related constraint on central government participation in first generation community outcomes processes was the relatively limited capability and relatively low status of DIA within the ranks of government departments as the lead agency to facilitate central government participation in outcome processes. The department was not well prepared to undertake this role in time for the first generation outcomes processes. In fact, in the local government arena some saw the MSD as the lead government agency rather than DIA. There were commonly held views that DIA needed to demonstrate stronger leadership and enhance capability to carry out its role.

A range of community organisations and individuals took part to varying degrees in community outcomes processes, but the majority of participants were the usual suspects, that is, those who were familiar with and had participated in council consultation processes. Several organisations that were actively involved had picked up the cues at the beginning of the process and considered that they needed to stay involved in the whole process.

The outcomes process is expected to be facilitated by local authorities, but "owned" by the community. This created a tension in the minds of some participants in outcome processes. Cost,

time, and capacity were all issues for community organisations and individuals and made it difficult for organisations to stay involved in the process throughout. Lack of knowledge and understanding was also a concern for community participants. Some community groups felt left out. There were individual cases of submissions not being heard, of an understanding that feedback would be given and nothing was received and that council behaved as if it was their process rather than community owned. There was also a concern expressed by a single respondent of not being treated as equal partners in the process. Such concerns emphasise the importance of designing engagement processes which are socially inclusive.

The design of the engagement process should also ensure that participants invited to stakeholder forums and other fora of engagement reflect diversity within the wider community. The engagement methods only partially drew a wider community into deliberation. Larger councils may wish to experiment with citizens' juries and deliberative polling.

The first generation of community outcomes processes highlighted the particular struggle for local Māori to partake in outcomes processes when they are expected to participate in other central and local government consultations as well. One case study area initiated a separate Māori community outcomes process but this was an exception. While there were some positive comments from Māori respondents regarding their experiences as participants, it was clear that the process did not allow for Māori cultural values to be fully expressed. There was a common concern that many councils did not have a strong relationship with their Māori or iwi communities. The issue of relationship and engagement between Māori and government was a nationally sensitive topic at the time on account of the seabed and foreshore ownership conflict between Māori and the Crown.

The business sector was notably absent from first generation community outcomes processes. This is a significant omission in view of the role of the business sector in generating employment and income opportunities within regions and localities and thereby contributing to economic well-being.

9.5 Recommendations

The community governance mandate in the LGA (2002) enables community engagement and intergovernmental collaboration for community well-being and sustainable development to an extent not previously witnessed in New Zealand. The Third Way post-1999 Labour coalition governments have been keen to forge stronger links with communities and improve inter-governmental relationships for political and pragmatic reasons. It is hoped that robust and ongoing informed deliberative engagement and collaborative decision-making will enable all communities of interest to discover shared values and build up trust. It is also hoped that governmental jurisdictions across a number of interrelated and interdependent policy domains and geographical scales will collaborate more effectively to respond to community needs.

Our evaluation of community outcome processes as a forum for community governance leads us to conclude that local government capability (i.e., commitment and capacity) for facilitating ongoing deliberative community engagement is significantly variable. The community outcome processes councils have facilitated for their first generation Long-Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs) has been a steep learning curve for personnel in local and central government agencies, as well as community participants.

In essence, we find that New Zealanders have failed to fully grasp the opportunity that informed, deliberative community-based engagement offers as a forum for community governance mandated under the LGA. The underlying reasons for this shortcoming are as follows.

Firstly, it is important to appreciate that the paradigm of community governance in the LGA constitutes a new approach to local government, and not just a new function of local government. This appreciation is required of all central and local government agencies and other non-governmental stakeholders, as well as the wider civil society. There is significant danger of local authority members and senior staff and other participant stakeholders seeing the community outcomes process as a one-off requirement and giving it low profile in the local government setting.

Secondly, the significance of undertaking the task of facilitating community outcomes in a participatory and technically satisfactory manner should not be under-estimated by the policy makers or by the participants. The LGA is aimed at strengthening community governance based on a 'whole-of-government' sustainable development strategic planning paradigm. Community outcomes and indicators to measure progress towards outcomes are an integral part of the accountability and performance enhancement logic model embedded in the LGA strategic planning framework. The success of the LGA is thus dependent to a much greater extent than many seem to appreciate on robust community engagement processes.

Thirdly, the community outcome processes were undertaken on an institutional landscape that was less than ideal. There was confusion stemming from lack of policy direction or guidance from central government regarding such matters as: prioritisation of outcomes; tensions between contiguous local authorities when deciding if it was appropriate to collaborate; and concerns that councils were being, yet again, forced to undertake an unfunded mandate when the outcomes belonged to the community, and not to the council. Central government departmental input was left largely to individual departments and officers. There was also relatively limited guidance available to local authorities from central government.

Based on the study findings, we recommend that the LGA be clarified to provide better guidance in three respects.

- The constraints on the effectiveness of first generation community outcome processes stemmed from the provisions in the LGA relating to community outcome processes and how these provisions have been interpreted and implemented by local and central government. Although the Act manifestly mandates local authorities to facilitate deliberative community outcomes processes as a forum for community governance and expects central government departments to contribute to this process, the procedural requirements relating to the role of local authorities are limited in scope. Local authorities have discretion to facilitate a process appropriate to their particular circumstances and central government provided only limited guidance to assist local authorities in this respect for first generation LTCCPs. While flexibility in designing community outcomes processes may be desirable, a lack of adequate understanding of the community outcomes process as a pivotal part of the community governance mandate of the Act has limited its potential as a forum for community governance. Inadequate procedural guidance is also reflected in outcome statements, which are framed as generic, high level aspirations and thus not very useful in providing guidance for collective decision-making and action. A good practice web site akin to MfE's *QualityPlanning* website could be a useful resource for practitioners.
- A notable omission in the strategic planning logic model in the LGA is local authority outcomes. Local authority outcomes are conceptually parallel to central government departmental outcomes, and both contribute to community outcomes. This is not always evident in the framing of LTCCPs. It is necessary to make this relationship clearer in the Act to avoid misunderstanding.

- Related to the above, it needs to be made clear how the outcomes-focused (as opposed to the outputs focussed) strategic planning regime recently introduced for the State sector (central government departments) based on the *Public Finance Act (2004)* and *Crown Entities Act (2004)* will interface with the local government community outcomes-focussed strategic planning regime in the LGA. The way the relationship evolves between these two parallel planning regimes will have implications for the role of central government departments in community outcomes processes and the extent to which central government departments will collaborate with local government to respond to community outcomes within a ‘whole-of-government’ planning paradigm. These concerns reflect the constitutional constraints on the relationship between central and local government and need clarification.

Our other recommendations are as follows:

- In the local government setting, it is important that elected members and senior management staff understand the community governance mandate enshrined in the LGA. The spirit and purpose of community governance needs to be embraced rather than be seen as a one off function of local government and possibly a threat to previously familiar roles. In the local government sector, old ways are hard to break and the required institutional and cultural change will not occur overnight. These informal or ‘soft’ institutional constraints and barriers need to be addressed. The role of council in the community outcomes process is one of working in collaboration with other stakeholders to facilitate deliberative community engagement. As part of the community they represent, they can contribute by providing feedback on draft and final outcomes.
- It was essentially left to individual central government departments to decide their level of participation and central government agencies took part in the process primarily at the regional level. A few central government agencies enthusiastically responded to the opportunity to become participants in community outcomes process and others did not see themselves having a role because they saw it as a local authority responsibility and took part only if they were invited. This issue needs to be addressed by the State Services Commission.
- Although the lead agency to facilitate central government participation in outcome processes, the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) had limited capability for doing so and was seen as having relatively low status within the ranks of government departments. The department was not well prepared to undertake this role in time for the first generation outcomes processes. In fact, in the local government arena, some saw the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) as the lead government agency rather than DIA, such was the MSD’s level of activity. There were commonly held views that DIA needed to demonstrate stronger leadership and enhance capability for carrying out its role. This issue needs to be addressed and DIA needs to be adequately resourced.
- Cost, time, and capacity were all issues for community organisations and individuals, and made it difficult to stay involved in the community outcomes process throughout. This needs to be addressed in subsequent community engagement. Larger councils may wish to experiment with citizens’ juries and deliberative polling.
- The above point also highlights the particular struggle for local Māori to partake in outcomes processes when they are expected to participate in other central and local government consultations as well. One case study area initiated a separate Māori community outcomes process, but this was an exception. While there were some positive comments from Māori respondents in our study, regarding their experiences as participants

in the community outcomes process, it was clear that the process did not allow for Māori cultural values to be fully expressed. There was a common concern that many councils did not have a strong relationship with their Māori or iwi communities. This concern needs to be addressed.

- The business sector must be engaged for the second generation community outcomes process. This was a significant omission in view of the role of the business sector in generating employment and income opportunities within regions and localities and thereby contributing to economic well-being.

The implications of the LGA mandate for community outcome processes need to be understood better by all stakeholders and not rest with government agencies alone. It is through the citizenry that the aspirations and needs of diverse communities can be understood in the socio and political context and we see this as the challenge for harnessing the potential of community governance. A sustainable development approach to achieve community well-being needs the voices of all sectors of society to be engaged in open dialogue. This can potentially have longer term benefits for communities from a sustainability perspective and also raise awareness within local and central government agencies that they really do need to do better in recognising diversity and being socially inclusive.

9.6. Conclusion

The characteristics of wicked problems, the realization that they pervade the contemporary policy landscape, and the poor match between such problems and the existing fragmented structure of central and local government organisations employing top-down measures warrants the exploration of alternative governance approaches (Lysak and Weber 2007). Through robust and ongoing informed deliberative engagement and collaborative decision making, these new institutions should create a genuine stake in decision processes for all participants and provide opportunities to discover shared values and forge trust among diverse, at times competing interests and governmental jurisdictions spread across a number of interrelated and interdependent policy domains and geographical scales.

In common with a recent shift away from neo-liberal politics in other Western societies, an incipient trend towards participative democracy in New Zealand may reflect a maturing democracy and borne out of the fact that community expectations of elected governments have not been met, there has been popular disillusionment with government generally and greater expectation from citizens. The current focus on community governance, community engagement, outcomes focused planning and ‘whole-of-government’ constructs in policy discourses may be construed as part of the process of the emergence of an enabling state.

The intent of the LGA was that new ways of governance that involved communities would emerge. Although not legislatively required to do so, it was hoped that agencies would work together to respond to community outcomes. Considerable effort and expense has gone into the first phase of defining outcomes in collaboration with communities. However, institutional inertia has meant that ‘business as usual’ practices by-and-large continue to prevail in local and central government arenas in terms of how they engage with communities. It is imperative that second generation community outcome processes benefit from the recent experiences that have been gained in deliberative engagement. The risk of failure to do so is a political rewrite of the legislation.

Appendix 1

Good Practice Guidelines on Community Consultation and Participatory Governance

This appendix contains references on international and New Zealand good practice guidelines on community consultation and participatory governance, as sourced from web sites. It is in two sections. The first (A) provides useful sources; the second (B) key values/principles regarding public participation and consultation distilled from the literature, (Prepared by Nancy Borrie, July 2005)

A. Useful Sources

Audit Commission. 1999: *Listen up! Effective Community Consultation*. Source: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk>. Retrieved: 25/05/2005.

Barton, N. & Shaw, A. (1999). *Striking a Balance. A Practice Guide on Consultation and Communication for Project Advocates*. Wellington.

Home Office, Cabinet Office, Active & WGGRS. *Compact: Getting it right together. Consultation and Policy Appraisal. A Code of Good Practice*. Source: <http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/resources/literature/engaging-citizens.html>. Retrieved: 25/05/2005.

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). *IAP2 Core Values for the Practice for Public Participation*. Source: <http://www.iap2.org/corevalues/index.shtml>. Retrieved: 26/05/2005.

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McAuley, K. & Brattman, M. *Hearing young Voices. Consulting Children and Young People, including those experiencing poverty and other forms of Social exclusion, in relation to Public*

Policy Development in Ireland. Key Issues for Consideration. Source: <http://www.youth.ie/download/yngvoices.pdf>. Retrieved: 05/07/05.

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Office for the Community & Voluntary Sector. 2005. *Collaborating with local government .* [Http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/key-sectors/collaborating-with-local-government](http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/key-sectors/collaborating-with-local-government). Retrieved: 13/01/2005.

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OECD. PUMA Policy Brief No.5. Public Management Service. May 1998. *Best Practice Guidelines for Evaluation.* <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/56/17/35060864.pdf>. Retrieved 04/07/05.

OECD.PUMA Policy Brief No.10. *Engaging Citizens in Policy-making. Information, Consultation and Public participation.* Source: <http://www.goodpracticeparticipate.govt.nz/rsources/lieterature/engaging-citizens.html>. Retrieved: 25/05/2005.

OECD.2001. *Citizens as Partners: Information, Consultation & Public Participation in Policy-Making. Executive Summary.* Source: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/57/2537528.pdf>. Retrieved: 04/07/05

The Controller and Auditor General *Tumaki o te Mana Arotake.* 1998. *Public Consultation and Decision-making in Local Government.* Wellington: Controller and Auditor General.

The Controller and Auditor General *Tumaki o te Mana Arotake.* 2004. *Good Practice for Managing Public Communications by Local Authorities. April 2004.* Source: <http://www.aog.govt.nz/HomePageFolders/Publications/public-communications/public-communications>. Retrieved: 1/07/05

The Office of Ethnic Affairs. 2000. *Ethnic Perspectives in Policy Part 2 Appendices p.36-38* Source:[http://www.ethnicaffairs/oeawebsite.nsf/Files/EthnicPerspectivesPolicyPartThree/\\$file/E](http://www.ethnicaffairs/oeawebsite.nsf/Files/EthnicPerspectivesPolicyPartThree/$file/E) . Retrieved: 05/07/2005

B. Key Values/Principles regarding Public Participation and Consultation Distilled from the Literature

A summary of the key values or principles are identified with their source.

1. The public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect them: IAP2
2. The process is such that public input will potentially impact decisions: IAP2, OECD, UK Home Office, UK Audit Commission
3. Consultation is underlain by reasonableness and fairness: NZ QP
NZ Controller and Auditor (NZCAG) 1998: conducted in accordance with natural justice
4. The public participation process communicates the interests of all participants: IAP2
5. The public participation process meets the process needs of all participants: IAP2
NZ Office of Ethnic Affairs: be flexible in timing of any meetings.
6. The public participation process seeks out & facilitates input of those affected: IAP2
NZQP: The process is compelling, i.e. people want to be involved and know council will listen to their views.
NZQP: All those affected or with an interest are identified, then informed and encouraged to participate
NZ Office of Ethnic Affairs: participants have trust and confidence in those undertaking consultation.
7. Participants define how they will participate: IAP2
NZ Office of Ethnic Affairs: Have structures that allow all ethnic members to feel part of the process.
8. The public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way: IAP2
NZ CAG: Communications are consistent with purposes of local government and are in the collective interest of the communities.
Communications comply with applicable council policies & guidelines as to process and content.
Factual and explanatory information is presented in an:
 - accurate (i.e. can be substantiated);
 - complete (i.e. all information needed to make a full & proper assessment of the subject matter);
 - fairly expressed (i.e. objective, unbiased, equitable, it is clear what is fact, opinion, analysis, or comment; makes clear what is being compared, does not exaggerate);
 - politically neutral way (i.e. does not take the position of any Council Member);
 - issues are put in an even-handed, non-partisan way.
9. The public participation process communicates to participants how their input affected decision making: IAP2
NZ QP: public and council clear about how consultation will influence making the final decision
NZ Office of Ethnic Affairs: make clear the role input will have
10. Commitment to public participation process by politicians, senior managers & officials: OECD
NZ QP: consultation is not treated as a mere formality

NZQP: Consultation is more than merely tell or present
NZ CAG 1998: view consultation as more than simply notifying the public & receiving submissions
NZQP: consultation is seen as good management practice & a practical way of informing decision-making

11. All parties approach it with an open mind: NZ QP
NZ CAG 1998: officers and elected members should be unbiased & have an open mind
NZ CAG 2004: Communication should avoid the appearance & reality of bias or pre-determination, especially when summarising facts or arguments.
12. Citizens rights to be consulted and receive information are grounded in law or policy: OECD
NZ CAG 1998: In accordance with the law
NZCAG: Local authorities have appropriate policies and practices in place to ensure compliance with any specific legal requirements or any general duty to consult
13. Objectives for information, consultation & participation should be clear. OECD
UK Home Office: Write documents in simple language
Make clear what decisions can & can't be changed
NZ QP: purpose of consultation made clear at outset. The proposal, reason for consultation, intended use of feedback information, and who will decide is made clear.
14. Roles and responsibilities are made clear: OCED
NZ CAG 2004: council has ensured people know how they will be affected by local authorities actions and their rights and responsibilities in relation to those actions.
UK Home Office: Use more than one method of consultation
Process is flexible and sensitive to needs to those consulted: reach all of targeted audience, specific needs, interests and contributions of sectors that represent women, minority groups and socially excluded
UK Audit Commission: process is inclusive
UK Home Office: Encourage honest views, e.g. assure confidentiality if requested
UK Home Office: Learn from others in sector and government
UK Home Office: Publicise consultation and encourage participation by involving membership and infra-structural organisations
15. Public participation process is begun early to allow options to be developed: OECD
UK Home Office: identify public participation possibilities when developing policies & procedures
Office of Ethnic Affairs: plan consultation rather than do at the last minute
16. Adequate time is allowed for public participation process: OECD, NZQP, UK Home Office, Office of Ethnic Affairs.
NZ QP: Allow sufficient time for everyone to respond
Reasonable opportunity is given for participants to express their views
Consultation cannot however be expected to go on indefinitely
NZ CAG: Ensure all significant points of view are aired
NZQP: Consultation does not necessarily reach resolution
Office of Ethnic Affairs: recognise and be reasonable about demands made on people.
17. Adequate information is provided throughout the public participation process: OECD
NZ QP: adequate information is provided so that participants understand how they are affected

18. Information provided is objective, complete and accessible: OECD
 NZ CAG 2004: Issues are presented in an objective manner.
 Advantages and disadvantages of particular options are mentioned.
19. All citizens receive equal treatment with respect to access to information: OECD
20. Adequate financial, human and technical resources are allocated to the public participation process in order that it is successful: OECD
 NZQP: Sufficient appropriate skills and resources were available to develop and carry out public consultation exercises
 NZ CAG 2004: Local authorities can spend money on communications to meet a community's need for information about Council's role and activities. It can be targeted with respect to:
 - a particular audience
 - method of communication
 - cost efficiency
21. Ensure officials have the skills, guidance and training necessary to undertake the task:
 OECD UK Audit Commission: Process is competently carried out
22. Ensure the organisation's culture supports officials' endeavours: OECD
23. Ensure government initiatives to inform, and obtain feedback are coordinated across government departments: OECD
24. Knowledge management is enhanced: OECD
25. Policies are coherent: OECD
26. Duplication is avoided: OECD
27. Risk of consultation fatigue lessened among citizens and civil society organisations: OECD
28. The coordination process ensures innovation and flexibility: OECD
29. Results are carefully analysed: UK Home Office
30. (Local)Government gives account of use made of input: OECD
 UK Home Office: report back on views received and what has been done as a result
 NZQP: good feedback is given so participants are reassured their views & efforts are valued.
31. The policy-making process is open and transparent: OECD
32. Evaluation of performance: Government needs the tools, information and capacity to evaluate their performance: OECD
 UK Home Office: evaluate after consultation & learn lessons for next time
 NZQP: Consider how to evaluate effectiveness of communication
33. Governments take concrete actions to enhance citizens' ability to provide input: OECD
34. Government supports capacity-building among civil society organisations for public participation: OECD

Appendix 2:

Managing for Outcomes- Guidance for Government Departments

(Source: SSC webpage www.ssc.govt.nz; downloaded 31 Oct 2007)

The State Services Commission website provides information and guidance for central government departments about 'Managing for Outcomes' (MfO). It includes guidance about the Managing for Outcomes initiative as a whole, as well as specific guidance about, for example, how to prepare a Statement of Intent (SOI). For further information on this initiative email: mfo@ssc.govt.nz.

The [Pathfinder website](#) also contains a range of resources helpful to implementing Managing for Outcomes.

Note: Guidance for preparation of the annual report can be found on the Treasury website at: <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publicsector/annualreport>.

[Performance information measures and standards in the SOI and Annual Report](#) /4/2007

Developed by the Treasury and the State Services Commission, in consultation with the Office of the Auditor-General. April 2007.

For printing /downloading use the PDF version, above

[Guidance and Requirements for Departments - Preparing the Statement of Intent \(March 2007\)](#) 15/3/2007

Note that this revised version of the December 2006 guidance updates the section on SOI production requirements for physical and electronic copies. All other content is unchanged.

Published by the State Services Commission and Treasury, March 2007, ISBN 0-478-29360-7, Crown ...

[Getting Better at Managing for Outcomes - self assessment tool](#) 20/7/2005

A tool to help organisations consider their progress in results-based management and identify development objectives. State Services Commission, June 2005. ISBN 0-478-24499-1.

For printing/downloading, use the pdf version above.

[Learning from Evaluative Activity - Enhancing Performance through Outcome-focussed Management](#) 20/11/2003

How, when and where to use evaluative products to improve management decisions. November 2003, Managing for Outcomes Steering Group.

[2003/04 Annual Reports: Guidance and Requirements](#)

4/11/2003

Prepared by the Steering Group Managing for Outcomes Roll-out 2004-2005. Issued November 2003. ISBN 0-478-24445-2.

Note: Paragraph 29, in the section 'Equal Employment Opportunities', was updated on 27 June 2005.

Note: Reporting requirements for the Financial Year ending 30 June ...

[Managing for Outcomes: Guidance for Departments \(2003\)](#)

15/9/2003

Prepared by the Steering Group Managing for Outcomes Roll-out 2004-2005. Issued September 2003.

[Workshop 3: Capability - Proceedings](#)

4/12/2002

Capability was the third in a series of workshops for Public Service departments. Presentations and related material from the workshop are published here for online viewing - in the 'Related files' section on the left of this page.

The information comprises: the 'Capability Quick ...CHECK THE REST – IS THERE MORE?

Appendix 3

Case Study Statistical Information

Auckland City
2006 Census data shows 404,658 people usually live in Auckland City. This is an increase of 36,909 people, or 10.0 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity- European 54.4%; Māori 7.8%; Pacific peoples 13%; Asian 24%. Age – 65 years and over 9.6 %; under 15 years 18.8 %.
Interviews: 5 comprising local government employees 2; elected members 2; community representatives 1 and central government agency 1
Auckland Region
2006 Census data shows 1,303,068 people usually live in Auckland Region. This is an increase of 144,177 people, or 12.4 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity- European 56.5%; Māori 11.1%; Pacific peoples 14.3%; Asian 18.8%. Age – 65 years and over 9.9%; under 15 years 22.1%
Interviews: 7 comprising local government employees 2; elected members 2; and central government agencies 3.
Buller District
2006 Census data shows 9,702 people usually live in Buller District. This is an increase of 78 people, or 0.8 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity – European 81.1%; Māori 8.6%; Pacific People 0.7%; Asian 0.7%. Age – 65 years and over 15.6 %; under 15 years 19.8 %.
Interviews: 3 focus groups: comprising 1 local government employees group; 1 elected members group and 1 community representatives group.
Canterbury Region
2006 Census data shows 521,832 people usually live in Canterbury Region. This is an increase of 40,401 people, or 8.4 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity – European 77.4%; Māori 7.2%; Pacific peoples 2.1%; Asian 5.7%. Age – 65 years and over 13.9 %; under 15 years 19.6 %
Interviews: 5 comprising local government employees 3; elected members 1 and community representatives 1
Christchurch City
2006 Census data shows 348,435 people usually live in Christchurch City. This is an increase of 24,375 people, or 7.5 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity – European 75.4%; Māori 7.6%; Pacific peoples 2.7%; Asian 7.7%. Age – 65 years and over 13.5 %; under 15 years 18.8%
Interviews: 9 interviews comprising local government employees 4;

community representatives 4 and central government agency 1.

Hamilton City

2006 Census data shows 129,249 people usually live in Hamilton City. This is an increase of 12,993 people, or 11.2 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity – European 65.3%; Māori 19.9%; Pacific peoples 4.2%; Asian 10.4%. Age – 65 years and over 10.1 %; under 15 years 21.9%

Interviews: 7 comprising local government employees 3; community representatives 2; Iwi/Māori representatives 1 and central government agency 1

Nelson District

2006 Census data shows 42,888 people usually live in Nelson City. This is an increase of 1,323 people, or 3.2 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity- European 80.4%; Māori 8.7%; Pacific peoples 1.8%; Asian 2.5%. Age – 65 years and over 14.5 %; under 15 years 19.2 %

Interviews: 10 interviews comprising local government employees 2; elected members 2; community representatives 2; Iwi representatives 1; and central government agencies 3.

Papakura District

2006 Census data shows 45,183 people usually live in Papakura District. This is an increase of 4,515 people, or 11.1 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity – European 61.2%; Māori 26.5%; Pacific peoples 10%; Asian 8.1%. Age – 65 years and over; 10.1%; under 15 years 25%

Interviews: 5 comprising local government employees 3; central government agencies 2

Waitaki District

2006 Census data shows 20,223 people usually live in Waitaki District. This is an increase of 135 people, or 0.7 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity –European 84.1%; Māori 5.5%; Pacific 1.1%; Asian 1.8%. Age – 65 years and over 20%; under 15 years 18.9 %.

Interviews: 4 focus groups comprising 1 local government employees group; 1 elected members group; 1 community representatives group; 1 central government agencies group and personal interview with 1 Iwi representative

Whakatane District

2006 Census data shows 33,300 people usually live in Whakatane District. This is an increase of 435 people, or 1.3 percent, since the 2001 Census. Ethnicity- European 58.4%; Māori 42.2%; Pacific peoples 2.3%; Asian 1.6%. Age – 65 years and over 12.6%; under 15 years 25.5 %.

Interviews: 6 comprising local government employees 2; elected members 1; community representatives 2 and central government agencies 2

Appendix 4

Community Outcomes Case Study Questionnaire for Community Participants



Planning Under Co-operative Mandates

PUCM Research Project: Planning and Governance Under *The Local Government Act (2002)*

Introduction

Welcome, and thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. We appreciate you giving your time to contribute your views regarding the community outcomes engagement processes conducted under the *Local Government Act (2002)*. This 6-year (2003-2009) project on Planning and Governance Under the LGA is part of a larger on-going FRST-funded research programme on “Planning Under Co-operative Mandates” (PUCM), based in the International Global Change Institute (IGCI), The University of Waikato. The project on Planning and Governance Under the LGA is being carried out under subcontract with Lincoln University, led by Professor Ali Memon (Lincoln) with Lorraine Leonard (IGCI) as Research Assistant.

Before we begin, I would like your permission to record the discussion. We will not be reporting your comments in any way that identifies you, but would like to use the recording of the discussion when writing the report findings to ensure we capture the full range of views in our final report. You are welcome to request a transcript and to correct or withdraw comments I have recorded. All information gathered in this study will be kept secure. The findings of this research will be published in a report to be made publicly available. The confidentiality of all opinions expressed by individual respondents will be fully protected. You are entitled to withdraw from participating in the study at any time. For further information about the PUCM research project is available at www.waikato.ac.nz/igci/pucm

If you have any questions please contact one of us:

Professor Ali Memon Environment, Society and Design Division Lincoln University PO Box 84 Lincoln 7647 Email: Memona@lincoln.ac.nz 03-325-3868	Lorraine Leonard Research Officer University of Waikato Private Bag, Hamilton 03-383-4184
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Interview Prompts – Community Participants Interviewer

Case Study	
Venue	
Date	
Interviewee(s)	Organisation and Position

Note: Some of the questions have been framed as closed (Yes/ No) questions. However please feel free to elaborate wherever you feel this is appropriate.

PART 1

The LGA states that local authorities must ensure that the community outcomes processes encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. The following questions seek your views on the extent the community outcomes identification processes in this community have been inclusive and thus reflective of community diversity.

Question 1.1 *The concept of “community outcomes” is new. To what extent did you and your organisation as a whole have an adequate understanding of the concept and process prior to engaging with the community to identify community outcomes?*

Question 1.2 Which of the following community outcomes identification processes were you involved in?

Process	<i>Involvement Level</i>		
	<i>None</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Significant</i>
Design of community engagement			
Steering Group membership			
Undertaking community engagement			
Participating in community engagement			
Information analysis			
Writing outcomes statements			
Prioritisation			
Communication			

Question 1.3 *Given that community outcomes are “owned” by the community, do you think elected member participation in identifying community outcomes is beneficial or detrimental to this process? Why?*

Question 1.4 *Did the process used to engage with the community to identify community outcomes encourage an appropriate level of participation from organisations and members of the public?*

(Probe – reflected community diversity? – all voices had an opportunity to be heard?)

Question 1.5 *Do you think there were any barriers to participation by the community? If so, can you explain what these were, how they impacted on participation and what do you think could be done to remove those barriers.*

(Prompt – access to process, consultation fatigue, process duplication)

Question 1.6 *In terms of encouraging the community to participate in identifying community outcomes, what were the benefits and limitations of the processes used to engage with the community?*

PART 2

The Local Government Act requires local authorities to “carry out” a community outcomes identification process, and also to encourage the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. The following questions seek to find out your views on how and to what extent your local authority has balanced these two potentially competing requirements?

Question 2.1 *Do you think the local authority had the trust of participants to undertake a meaningful process from the outset or has trust had to be developed? If trust has had to be developed, how has this been done and how effectively?*

Question 2.2 *Some councils provided only basic background information to participants in order to allow the community the opportunity to more fully express their views. Others have provided detailed information and analysis to participants to enable them to quickly identify and deliberate on the key issues. Do you consider that the background information provided by your local authority to participants and the community to assist in identifying community outcomes was appropriate?*

Question 2.3 *Some councils have taken a relatively hands-on managerial approach to the community outcomes identification process, while others have taken a relatively more collaborative hands-off approach? In your view what are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach and which approach do you consider more appropriate for community outcomes identification and why?*

- *In hindsight, was the approach taken by the local authority appropriate?*

Question 2.4 *Some councils have utilised in-house staff to facilitate community outcomes identification processes, while others have engaged an independent facilitator in order to distance the council from the process. In your view to what extent is the use of an independent facilitator warranted and why?*

Question 2.5 *Did any participant, organisation or sector appear to seek to dominate the community outcomes identification processes? If so, how was this handled?*

Question 2.6 *Given that councils have the responsibility to ensure that a community outcomes identification process is carried out, did the process undertaken by your council result in community outcomes statements that are reflective of community aspirations and priorities rather than council aspirations and priorities?*

PART 3

One of the benefits often attributed to community participation in democratic processes is that it enables cognitive & social learning to take place.

Cognitive learning. Cognitive learning is about developing a better self awareness & understanding of issues.

Social learning. Generally, stakeholders have such different worldviews that they find it hard to understand each other. Shared learning is required to reach some level of understanding on which dialogue and collective decision-making becomes possible. This is generally referred to as 'social learning'.

The next set of questions seek to find out to what extent the community outcomes identification processes have facilitated and enhanced cognitive & social learning?

***Question 3.1** To what extent has the community outcomes identification process resulted in an increased level of common understanding among participants, and in particular for community members, of community issues and aspirations?*

***Question 3.2** To what extent has the community outcomes identification process resulted in an increased level of common understanding among participants, and in particular for community members, of Māori issues and aspirations? Have there been any barriers to increasing the level of understanding of Māori issues and aspirations e.g through understanding tikanga Māori.*

***Question 3.3** To what extent has the community outcomes identification process resulted in the sharing of responsibility and commitment for achievement of community outcomes?*

***Question 3.4** Do you think the community outcomes identification processes enabled your organisation to learn anything new about the community's aspirations? Did the processes produce any surprises?*

***Question 3.5** To what extent has participating in the community outcomes identification process increased your personal level of understanding of community issues and aspirations?*

PART 4

One of the purposes of local government as stated in the LGA is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities. The Act anticipates a shift to a more participatory democratic model. The next five questions look at whether the assumptions underlying a participatory democracy approach are realistic in the context of the community outcomes processes.

***Question 4.1** To what extent were participants motivated by the desire to promote the public good - and did this change through the course of the process?*

***Question 4.2** Were participants open to understanding the views of others and were capable of empathising with others – did this change through the course of the process?*

***Question 4.3** Were participants willing and able to engage in discussion and seeking and taking opportunities to speak in order to share knowledge and perspectives?*

***Question 4.4** Did the trust between participants increase as the process progressed? If so, how and to what extent?*

***Question 4.5** To what extent did trust in the process increase as the process progressed?*

PART 5

Section 14 of the LGA states the principles of local government. One of these principles refers to local authorities needing to take a sustainable development approach. The questions in Part 5 seek to find out whether and to what extent community outcomes processes have been informed by sustainability approaches?

***Question 5.1** To what extent, and how, has local government's responsibility to take a sustainable development approach been reflected in the community outcomes processes?*

***Question 5.2** Was there explicit inclusion of sustainable development concepts in community outcomes discussions?*

***Question 5.3** To what extent have participants in the community outcomes process developed a common understanding of sustainable development concepts?*

***Question 5.4** To what extent has participation in community outcomes processes enhanced your personal understanding of sustainable development?*

PART 6

In this final part of our discussion we want you to reflect on the purpose of local government as stated in the LGA, i.e.- (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future. The following questions seeks your views on the degree to which community outcomes identification exercise has added value in terms of these two objectives of the Act?

***Question 6.1** To what extent has the community outcomes concept been embraced by the different sectors of the community- are there differences between the sectors?*

- Council -
- Central government -
- Social sector -
- Environmental sector -
- Business sector -
- Arts and culture, sport -
- Māori -
- Aged -
- Youth -

Question 6.2 *To what extent do you think the community outcomes process has empowered local communities and community members?*

Question 6.3 *Did community groups and the community in general have the commitment and capacity to realise opportunities that can arise through community outcomes processes?*

Question 6.4 *To what extent do you think the community outcomes process has empowered local government?*

Question 6.5 *Does this council/ local government have the commitment and capacity to realise those opportunities?*

Question 6.6 *The requirement in the LGA to undertake a community outcomes process can be interpreted as an attempt to marry electoral and participatory models of democratic decision-making. Some may argue that this could disempower elected members. To what extent, if any, do you share this view?*

Question 6.7 *To what extent has the community outcomes identification processes created an effective platform for collaboration amongst service providers to achieve community outcomes? Please explain?*

Question 6.8 *The cost of undertaking community outcomes processes is funded from rates. Do you consider community outcomes processes will improve community well-being and provide value for money for the community?*

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