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Introduction

Background

1. New local government legislation administered by the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) was enacted in 2001 and 2002. This report presents the results of a case study of the perceived effects of the legislation upon the Waimakariri District Council. It is part of a series of nine case studies providing a rich and deliberately detailed account of how these local authorities have adapted to the 2001 and 2002 legislation, and in particular Part Six of the Local Government Act (the Act) relating to planning, decision-making, and accountability.

2. These case studies were requested by the Manager of Strategic Analysis and Information of the Local Government and Community (LG&C) Branch of the Department as part of the research programme as laid out in the Strategy for Evaluating Local Government Legislation. This long-term research programme is intended to run until 2013 to understand whether the new legislation is operating effectively. Work completed so far on this programme has produced a strategy and a framework for the evaluation programme, and a report on the roll-out of the legislation.

Research objectives

3. The purpose of the case studies was to provide an in-depth and detailed analysis of how local government has reacted to, interpreted and applied the new Act. This research contributes to the local government sector’s knowledge of the effects of the new legislation. The specific objectives of the local government case studies were:

   • How local authorities have implemented and addressed the new legislation’s provisions around planning, decision-making and community outcomes
   • How local authorities worked with their communities to develop community outcomes
   • How local authorities developed and implemented their Long-Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs) and involved communities and stakeholders in the process
   • How local authorities have used the LTCCPs within their organisation
   • How local authorities have consulted and interacted with their communities and stakeholders over decision-making
   • How communities and stakeholders are interacting with local authorities.

4. In considering these objectives, the case studies evaluated local authorities’ application of community outcomes, strategic planning and decision-making. These three components are critical in achieving the Act’s aims of promoting democratic accountability and sustainable development of local government.

5. Insight into the new legislation, provided by the case studies, will also allow the Department to identify opportunities for further research to improve understanding of the effects of the 2001/2002 legislation.

Legislative intent

6. The Act “is designed to provide democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities.” The Act enables local authorities to use a sustainable development approach to promoting community wellbeing. To help make local government more effective, their powers were altered by the Act – they moved away from the prescriptive and restrictive nature of the

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1 Local Government Act 2002; Local Government (Rating) Act 2002; Local Electoral Act 2001
previous legislation to an empowered environment. Balancing this empowerment, the Act also promotes accountability and transparency in local authorities, as detailed in Part 6.

7. The responsibility for facilitating the development of community outcomes with their communities is a new role for all local authorities. Some local authorities had already started a process for setting targets, goals and outcomes for community development, and facilitating other processes that identified strategic direction for their communities, before the enactment of the legislation.

8. While strategic planning was part of the traditional role of local authorities, the legislation emphasised longer-term planning functions and responsibilities (e.g. the LTCCP) to improve the way local authorities undertake strategic planning. Further, the Act asked councils to identify links between strategic planning and the community outcomes identified by the local authority’s communities.

9. The Act requires local authorities to be more considered and transparent in their decision-making. Local authorities need to identify options for achieving the objective of the decision and assess those options by considering the benefits and costs in terms of the present and future wellbeing of the community and alignment with community outcomes. It is expected therefore community outcomes will affect local authorities’ decision-making. The Act continues to require local authorities to use a special consultative procedure (SCP) for consultation on particular issues and decisions. Further, the Act also now requires local authorities to establish and maintain opportunities for Māori to contribute to decision-making.

**Case study methodology**

10. The case study method was adopted to provide an in-depth and detailed analysis of how local government has reacted to, interpreted and applied the three elements of the Act. In particular, the case studies provided the ability to select councils with significant differences in terms of population, location and nature; and contrasting responses to the legislation.

11. Local authorities were selected using the following purposive sampling criteria:

   1. Type of local authority (regional council / territorial local authority)
   2. Sector (metropolitan / provincial / rural as defined by Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) membership
   3. Councils who have not participated in previous or proposed future studies to expand knowledge about local government in New Zealand
   4. Rate of general population growth to ensure inclusion of councils experiencing extremes of population growth / decline
   5. Proportion of Māori residents to ensure inclusion of councils with high Māori populations
   6. Location (North / South Island) to ensure inclusion of geographical spread across New Zealand and factors such as degree of urbanisation.

**Waimakariri District Council case study specifics**

12. The case study of the Waimakariri District Council was undertaken by Litmus. The research for this report was conducted to the ethical standards of the Association of Social Science Researchers and the Australasian Evaluation Society. This case study report was prepared from the review of key documents and interviews with key informants listed below.

13. Documents reviewed:

14. Key informants interviewed:

- Four council officers
- Two councillors
- Two community representatives
- Two businesses representatives
- Two members of the Rūnanga.

15. Those interviewed were identified by council officers as knowledgeable about one or all of the three elements being examined in the case. They were recruited to the case study by staff from Waimakariri District Council. Face-to-face interviews were conducted by staff from Litmus during March 2008. Interviews lasted around one hour, and were digitally recorded. On request, interview notes were made available for review by participants.

16. Participants were informed that the Department and Litmus will seek to keep their information confidential, and steps have been taken in the preparation of this report to reduce the likelihood they will be identified by their comments. All provided informed consent for their interview.

Case study scope and analysis criteria

17. The information and data available to address the evaluation objectives are qualitative in nature. Interviews were conducted with a limited range of informants who agreed to participate. Litmus has undertaken a thematic analysis of the qualitative information to identify emerging themes, and to elicit differences across different stakeholders. Themes emerging were collaborated through triangulation of interviews with analysis of secondary data and documents.

18. The case study report is therefore indicative, not definitive. That is, we are unable to categorically say whether or not the themes noted throughout the case study report are held by all stakeholders of Waimakariri District Council. Nor is it possible to comment accurately about whether the strength of the
views represented in this report was widely shared. We are, however, confident that this report accurately represents the views and perceptions of participants who contributed to this case study.

Acknowledgement

19. The Department and Litmus wish to express our thanks to all those who contributed to this case study. We would especially like to thank council officers of Waimakariri District Council for assisting us in recruiting key informants and those who reviewed the draft case study.
Community Outcomes

Legislative intent

“The Act promotes greater accountability between local authorities and their communities and a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority. The Act requires local authorities to facilitate a process with their communities, at least every six years, to identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of the district or region. The role of the local authority is to facilitate the process, with the community having ownership of the identified outcomes.

Identifying community outcomes is designed to promote better co-ordination and application of community resources, and inform and guide priorities for activities undertaken by local authorities and other organisations. Local authorities’ role is to facilitate the contribution other local authorities, government agencies, local organisations and the business sector make to the outcomes and priorities identified by the community.

Local authorities can decide what processes to use to identify and prioritise community outcomes but they must ensure that the processes encourage the community to contribute. They also must, before deciding on the process, identify other organisations and groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes, and, if practicable, secure their agreement to the process.”

Waimakariri District Council’s community outcomes process: overview of response to the legislation

20. Waimakariri District Council was established in 1989 from an amalgamation of two Boroughs and all or part of four rural counties or districts. Historically, this amalgamation created tensions, which continue to exist and influence the Council today, especially in relation to the service levels received by Rangiora and Kaiapoi.

21. Over the last twenty years, Waimakariri District’s population has significantly grown due to the migration of people initially from Christchurch City and more recently from elsewhere in New Zealand and from overseas locations such as the United Kingdom. Statistics New Zealand project the District’s population will continue to substantially grow during the next 20 years. Major urban developments are underway at Pegasus (a new town), Woodend East, areas to the east and west of Rangiora and planning permission is currently being sought for urban development in areas adjacent to Kaiapoi.

22. Waimakariri District Council sees significant challenges in providing for this growth and increasing community desire (and government regulations) for higher service levels. Since the middle of the 1990s, the Council has focused strongly on managing this growth and the pressure it places on the existing infrastructure. As an example, in the early 2000s, the Council constructed a major sewerage scheme including an ocean outfall to serve the urban areas to the east of the District, capable of accommodating projected population growth and additional industrial development.

23. In the 1990s, acknowledging growth challenges, Waimakariri District Council commenced the development of a long-term strategic visioning process, based on extensive community consultation. The introduction of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) was seen to align with Waimakariri District Council’s existing culture of community engagement in defining the Council’s strategic direction and decision-making. As one council officer reported two general views were held in the sector about the introduction of the LGA:

- A revolution – a brave new world for local government

24. For Waimakariri District Council, the LGA is very much perceived as the backing gate – one which institutionalised their existing practice in legislation.

25. Across participants, the introduction of the LGA was perceived positively as through the community outcomes process, long-term planning and decision-making principles, there is clearer direction and transparency in Council’s direction and decision-making than previously. Criticisms of the LGA tended to reflect process issues of implementation, prescriptiveness, and a lack of wide community awareness and understanding of the new Act. Currently, the key challenge for Waimakariri District Council is the tension between the long-term plan as laid out in the 2006/16 LTCCP and the mandate of the newly elected councillors, in 2007. This challenge is raising doubts in the minds of some participants about the value of long-term planning if the agreed direction is already being challenged within the first three years of the 10-year planning cycle.

**Waimakariri District Council’s previous ‘community outcomes’ process**

26. Since its establishment, Waimakariri District Council has emphasised managing change to ensure the maintenance of environmental standards and the quality of the District’s community life.

27. In 1993, Waimakariri District Council, as part of its leadership role, commenced the development of a long-term vision for the District. The vision was developed through a series of community workshops and discussions. In 1996, Waimakariri District Council released the strategy document *A vision for 2020 working towards a sustainable future for Waimakariri*, which was revised in 2001. The vision was influenced by the concept of the ‘triple bottom-line approach’ used in resource management in the 1990s. The vision therefore focused on social, environment and economic wellbeings, with aspects of what is now referred to as cultural wellbeing (eg community or group identity, traditions, behaviours, values, arts and crafts) included in social wellbeing.

28. The vision for 2020 was “The people of Waimakariri District will enjoy a high quality natural living and productive environment and a distinctive sense of community.” Central to the vision was the focus of Arohanui Kī Te Tangata: Regard to the People, and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi including the Ngai Tahu principle.4

29. In 1995, wide ranging community consultation was held to develop the District Development Strategy. This strategy focused on issues associated with servicing growth, and involved extensive work on options for the growth of the District’s towns. In 1997, Waimakariri District Council’s District Plan outlined its proposals for managing resources for the next ten years, and set out preferred directions of growth for each town in the District. The latter document aligned with the District Development Strategy.

30. In 2000, as planned, Waimakariri District Council refreshed the Vision 2020 based on community consultation and a community survey of 600 households. Relatively few changes were made to Vision 2020 as a result of the review.

31. The community outcome statements used in the interim LTCCP 2004/14 can be traced back to this previous work undertaken in the early to mid 1990s.

**Waimakariri District Council’s 2005 Community Outcomes Process:**

32. Council officers at Waimakariri District Council pride themselves in having complied with the Act and in aspiring to best practice. Therefore, council officers decided to undertake a round of consultation to develop community outcomes as prescribed by the Act, which they saw as a continuation of the earlier visioning exercises.

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4 This principle is based on a petition to the Queen prepared by Ngai Tahu in 1857; at the time that Ngai Tahu was pressing the Crown to honour the terms of Kemp’s Deed.
33. In 2003, the Council consulted with staff on how best to meet the requirements of the LGA and the development of the LTCCP. The initial undertaking by the CEO was that LTCCP commitments would be met without any additional resources. A restructuring occurred which resulted in a new unit being developed with the transfer of the Council’s two most experienced Resource Management Act Policy Planners and a clerical assistant from the Forward Planning Unit to the newly established Policy and Strategy Unit. This Unit was responsible for implementing the LGA, undertaking monitoring and reporting, and managing external relationships (for example with the regional council - Environment Canterbury).

34. In late 2004, Waimakariri District Council commenced their community outcomes process. This fell into streams:

- Central government engagement
- Community consultation.

Central government engagement

35. The framework used to engage with central government was based on the Canterbury Community Plans Project established in 2003 by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum. The main objective of the Community Plan Project was to minimise the time involved in meeting the process requirements when engaging with key organisations. The Community Plans Project consisted of elected and staff representatives from the Waimakariri, Christchurch, Ashburton, Banks Peninsula, Hurunui and Selwyn councils, as well as Environment Canterbury.

36. In 2005, the Canterbury Community Plans Project facilitated a series of workshops in Christchurch with central government. The purpose of the workshops was to inform central government agencies about the community outcomes process and make connections with those agencies who could contribute regionally to the community outcomes process. This was seen to reflect Waimakariri Council’s position that the community outcomes belonged to the community, and it was the responsibility of the Council to develop partnerships with central government and other service providers to work towards the goals identified by the community.

37. Connections made through these workshops led to Waimakariri and Hurunui District Councils jointly holding a follow-up round of discussions with central government agencies about community outcomes issues arising across their regions.

Community consultation

38. In late 2004, in line with the Act, Waimakariri District Council invited approximately 600 community groups and organisations in the District to be involved in the creation of community outcomes statements. In total, 76 replied to this request and indicated their preferred process for involvement.

39. The general public were also invited to participate via two consecutive inserts in the Council’s community notice board section of the Northern Outlook newspaper. Waimakariri District Council has a regular fortnightly two page spread in this local paper to update the community on Council activities.

40. Based on the feedback received, a series of workshops were held in March and April 2005 to identify community outcomes statements:

- Three geographically located public workshops at Oxford (16 attendees), Kaiapoi (23 attendees) and Rangiora (34 attendees)
- Five Vision Cafés in West Eyreton, Woodend, Waikuku, Tuahiwi and Ohoka to identify the community’s future aspirations (i.e. a café style community meeting where patrons physically move from table-to-table and discuss three key questions about their community)
- Four other workshops including a student forum (18 attendees), Rangiora Ward Advisory Board (all members), Rūnanga Workshop (9 attendees) and Community Leaders Workshop (29 attendees)
- Four street stalls in Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Woodend and Oxford
• Three information stalls at key community events including Celebrating Diversity, Oxford Show and Swannanoa Fair

• Six presentations to key stakeholders and community groups including Waimakariri Access Group, Road Safety Committee, Oxford Eyre Ward Advisory Board, Kaiapoi Community Board, Community Network Forum and Woodend Ashley Ward Advisory Board

• A leaflet survey, distributed on two occasions in the community newspapers, to gain feedback on the importance of the 2004 LTCCP Community Outcome Statements. 214 questionnaires were returned.

41. Radio advertising was used to encourage the community to become involved in developing the community outcome statements through discussions of questions such as:

- *What do we want our community to be like in 2011 and how can we make this happen?*
- *Right now, what are our community strengths (people and their skills, assets & resources) and how can we make best use of them?*
- *Right now, what is missing within our community (gaps, limitations) and how can we turn this around?*

42. The council was very pleased with what they felt was a high level of community engagement. A council manager commented their community is literate and people are willing to put their words on paper. The council officer reflected this willingness has developed over the years, starting with community consultation on the Resource Management Act’s District Plan, and continues through to a current response rate of around 85% on their customer satisfaction survey. In contrast, a councillor queried whether those who participated did reflect the wider community.

**Development and prioritisation of community outcomes**

43. Waimakariri District Council made it a priority that the outcomes reflected community input arising out of the consultation process. Council officers analysed the information collected from community engagement by:

- Using the 2004/14 LTCCP outcome statements as an analysis framework against which to sort the feedback from the community
- Identifying the relative importance of each existing outcome as defined by the wider community through a survey
- Assessing the continued relevance of each statement to the community against the 80 plus pages of feedback from across the community engagement methods
- Determining the trends across the various methods of engagement to identify whether new outcome statements were appropriate

44. Information in this analysis drew on a wide range of sources including: Workshop ‘verbatim’ feedback; specific priorities identified by each workshop; leaflet survey results; Future Path Canterbury 2003 survey results; 2005 District New Residents survey; Vision Café feedback with a District-wide theme. As a result, council officers identified 16 draft community outcome statements. A workshop was then held with other council staff and councillors to ensure the language of the statements were meaningful and clear to the reader.

45. Of the sixteen community outcome statements, six outcomes were identified as priorities based on community prioritisation during the consultation process. Appendix One lists the 16 community outcomes and the six priority outcomes.

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46. Through the consultation process, councillors attended meetings and workshops and were, in the main, interested observers in the process. Councillors signed-off the community outcomes and had input into the alignment and prioritisation of the community outcomes against the Council’s activities.

47. Finally, council officers placed comments under each outcome statement to highlight the aspects of each community outcome of particular relevance for and/or of significant concern to the community.

Confirming community outcomes

48. The final phase of Waimakariri District Council’s community outcome process was described as taking the community outcomes statements back to the community and asking ‘Have we heard you right’. This involved a two part consultation programme:

- A feature in a local newspaper, delivered to 11,000 households, requesting comment on the draft outcomes
- Mail out to 235 people including those who participated in the outcomes development and asked to be informed of progress.

49. Only 20 community members responded and after being reviewed, the Council concluded no further amendments were required to the draft community outcome statements.

50. Waimakariri District Council’s finalised community outcomes align with one or more of the four wellbeings, which are mapped out in the LTCCP Volume A 2006/16 (2006 p.18-21).

Links to LTCCP, wider Council documents and other stakeholders

51. Following identification of the community outcomes, Waimakariri District Council determined how they could contribute to each outcome through community services, infrastructure and facilities. The Council made explicit for each outcome their role and activities as a service provider, regulator, facilitator or advocate (refer LTCCP Volume A 2006, p.22-32).

52. The Council also identified a range of other organisations and groups, including those in the private sector, Māori, Government and non-Government organisations, who work on a range of projects and programmes that could contribute to achieving the community outcomes. Within the LTCCP Volume A 2006/16, key planning documents are noted for Waimakariri District Council and the other organisations relating to the community outcomes (refer LTCCP Volume A 2006, p.33-45). All organisations named in Volume A of the LTCCP (2006) were sent a copy of their mention in the LTCCP. The participation of these organisations in the Canterbury Community Plans meetings and/or Waimakariri’s consultation was seen as sufficient acknowledgement that they had a part to play in contributing to achieving the community outcomes. No formal correspondence in addition to sending out this information was initiated.

Role of community outcomes in decision-making

53. Waimakariri District Council uses a report template to ensure Council decisions and recommendations link back to the appropriate community outcomes. Reports by council officers to Council have a sub-section relating to community outcomes clearly showing the link between their recommendations and the community outcomes.

Monitoring community outcomes

54. Waimakariri District Council have identified indicators to assess progress towards the achieving the community outcomes. This measurement framework tracks progress toward community outcomes. The LTCCP Volume A 2006 (p.38-45) detailed a proposed outcomes monitoring framework.

55. Performance measures are also identified for the intended level of service for each Council activity relating to the community outcomes. Results of the measurements and any annual contribution by Council towards community outcomes are reported in the Council’s Annual Report.
Currently, the Council is preparing a baseline monitoring survey to feed into a report for the end of 2008.

Community outcomes benefits

In the main, council officers and councillors noted no significant ‘new’ benefit arising from the community outcomes process and outcomes developed as a result of the introduction of the LGA. This reflects the community and stakeholder input that confirmed the overarching framework provided by the original Vision 2020 document. At a more detailed level, there were some changes of emphasis.

Council officers, councillors and stakeholders identified positive features of the community outcomes process and outcomes that built on the gains from the earlier visioning exercise, specifically:

- Confirmation of Council’s direction
- Community linked decision-making
- Identification of Council services to assist in achieving desired outcomes
- Stronger links to agencies

Confirmation of Council direction

The 2005 community outcomes statements resembled those identified in the 1990s Vision 2020 consultation. Consequently, as one councillor noted, they confirmed the Council had heard and understood what is important to their community. Stakeholders also seemed to perceive the community outcomes as documenting the aims and objectives of the community to feed into Council’s strategic planning – the LTCCP.

Community linked decision-making

Council officers identified the report template linking Council’s decisions and recommendations back to the appropriate community outcomes as giving “credence, justification and transparency” to decision-making. Further, transparency was noted as especially useful for those decisions that some in the community believe do not relate to Council’s traditional core services.

Over time councillors saw themselves as having developed a greater appreciation of the community outcomes as underpinning the focus and activities of the Council. Particular value was seen in the ability to link Council activities back to community outcomes. This was reported as providing greater confidence that the Council was undertaking activities that meet the community’s preferred direction and outcomes.

Identification of Council services to assist in achieving desired outcomes

One council officer noted the monitoring of the community outcomes will enable the identification of gaps between community activities and Council activities. The Council’s survey of community emergency preparedness and recycling was given as an example. The council officer believed the survey findings will inform relevant council managers on how they can assist in addressing community gaps in emergency preparedness through their work programmes. The latter aligns with the priority outcome of there is a safe environment for all, for which the Council has both service provider and advocate role.

Stronger links to other agencies

One council officer described the community outcomes acting as an “anchor point” for engagement with other agencies. They cited the joint initiatives the council’s community teams have with the Ministry of Justice for a restorative justice facilitator, ACC on accident prevention, Safer Community Council and health promotion contracts. While many of these relationships predate the Act, the development of community outcomes contributed to the development of a common language between the agencies and enabled the identification of national funding streams to achieve outcomes.
64. This council officer acknowledged the Council struggles to find enough time to foster these relationships, and the collaborative projects arising from them. They felt this was reflecting a paradox: that once relationships are established, they need even more energy to achieve common outcomes.

**Community outcomes issues**

65. Two perspectives emerged around issues relating to the community outcomes and their development. A key internal issue for the Council was what were perceived to be a laborious and repetitive development process and the “constraints” other statutes place on Council’s ability to deliver the community outcomes. Outside of the Council, participants noted a lack of community understanding and ownership of the community outcomes in seeking to make positive change to the wider community.

**Internal issues for Council**

**Laborious development**

66. Having undertaken the Vision development work in the 1990s (a process similar to Community Outcomes identification), council staff saw the community outcomes process undertaken by the Waimakariri council as laborious and repetitive. The process was not perceived has having identified any new outcomes or directions, but rather provided further validation of what was already known.

**Constraints of other statutes**

67. Council informants noted that other statutes; such as the Resource Management Act, the Health Act, the Dog Control Act, the Gambling Act, liquor licensing and civil defence and emergency management legislation; regulate many Council operations. These informants further noted that the direction of a council could be affected by other plans and strategies such as the National Environmental Standards, Regional Land Transport Strategy and the Regional Policy Statement. These informants observed that the community outcomes might include aspirations that, to a greater or lesser extent, come within the ambit of these Acts, which could place constraints on what the council can do to achieve those outcomes. Additionally there may be constraints placed on the council power of general competence by the community under the LGA.

**Appropriateness of prioritisation of community outcomes**

68. A one-off-comment was made by a council officer who questioned the appropriateness of the prioritisation process. The officer reflected community outcomes cover the breadth of the four well-beings and thus it is “not a zero sum game” of deciding whether the focus should be clean water or good education. Further, they noted people in communities can have quite differing perspectives and priorities based on their lives and interests.

**External issues**

**Lack of understanding about community outcomes**

69. Many participants suspected the wider community would have little awareness and potentially struggle with the role of the community outcomes in both the council and the wider community. The latter was also reflected in the development of the community outcomes where council officers noted the community had difficulty with understanding how having community outcomes would improve their community.

70. One business stakeholder criticised the community outcomes process as offering “woolly results”. This stakeholder felt discussions at workshops tended to “degenerate into immediate social issues and not focus on the long-term strategic outcomes”. A similar view was reflected by a community stakeholder who described them as “wordy purdy”.

**Use of the community outcomes**
71. In the main, the business and community stakeholders we spoke with tended not to use the community outcomes within their organisations. Where community outcomes are being used, as mentioned by council officers and community stakeholders, is in seeking Council support for proposals through demonstrating the linkages to the community outcomes.

72. As intended, councillors participated in the community outcomes process as members of the community rather than in an official capacity. This reflected the desire to maintain the focus on listening to the voice of the community. However, one council officer felt this approach may have resulted in a lack of ownership of the outcomes or even the process by some councillors.

**Impact of community outcomes**

73. The process of identifying the community outcomes resulted in little perceived change for Waimakariri District Council among the key informants we spoke with. Participants attribute this to the earlier visioning process and earlier adaptation of a robust strategic planning process. In essence, the Act is seen by the key informants to have institutionalised what was existing Council practice.

74. Despite this perception of no overarching change, there are two early effects that informants linked to the introduction of community outcomes in the Act are:

1. Strengthening of relationships with key agencies
2. Transparency of decision-making back to community outcomes through use of the Council’s report template.

**Future community outcomes**

75. Currently, the Council is not reviewing the community outcomes in this round. Seven of the 11 councillors on the Waimakariri District Council are newly elected and the community outcomes are therefore a relatively new concept. A council officer commented that until the Council has received one round of monitoring and reporting on the community outcomes, it is likely they will be viewed only as an intellectual exercise or similar.

76. While the Council is not intending to conduct another community outcomes process at this stage, a council officer noted the need to “rain check the six priority outcomes”. Waimakariri District Council is intending, through community consultation, to validate the preference of the new Council to place greater emphasis on stimulating business growth in line with this prioritised community outcome. As explained by a council officer, priority outcomes do not necessarily represent a mandate for the Council to act in a particular way. It is acknowledged some outcome areas, such as involvement in business promotion, may engender strong views in the community about what is the appropriate role of Council. Consequently, these views need to be taken into consideration, together with those established through the community outcomes process. This is perceived to link to the power of general competence in the Act and the role of the community in the local authority area defining what the Council wants to do.

77. Informants also talked of strengthening the links between the community outcomes and Council’s and communities’ activities. This would “breathe more life into outcomes” for both council staff and the community – “i.e. is water becoming cleaner? is it easier to get jobs?” It is hoped this will be achieved through reporting on community outcomes progress as inputs into the development of the 2009/19 LTCCP. As a council officer noted, “unless community outcomes are made more real for people why should the Council or community do anything differently aside from refreshing activity plans.”

78. The council is also considering how to better engage the community in exploring the alternative options available in relation to what the community can afford (e.g. is it better value to spend on recreation services or to tarmac seal more rural roads?). As the council officer explained these trade-off decisions are not being made explicit to the community, nor are they related directly to prioritised community outcomes. It is intended these discussions will be fostered at both a councillor and community level through pre-LTCCP consultations (discussed further under LTCCP).

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6 “Businesses in the District are diverse, adaptable and growing”. (LTCCP Volume A 2006/16 p. 12)
Reflections of Waimakariri District Council implementation against the legislative intent

79. The table below summarises the legislative intent and Waimakariri District Council's implementation of the mandated community outcomes process. In reviewing the table, it needs to be acknowledged that only one round of community outcomes has been held, and therefore there were learnings to be gained and new processes to be developed.

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<th>Waimakariri District Council response</th>
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<td>Key stakeholders identified both as part of Vision 2020 and the development of the 2005 community outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Processes to encourage the community to contribute</td>
<td>Extensive community consultation to identify the outcomes using a range of mechanisms</td>
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<td>Identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of the district or region</td>
<td>Community outcomes identified, prioritised, and confirmed through ‘a have we got it right’ end-stage consultation</td>
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<td>Long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority</td>
<td>Community outcomes are embedded and linked in the LTCCP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guide priorities for activities undertaken by local authorities and other organisations</td>
<td>Six community outcomes were identified as priorities All Council reports reference community outcomes and decisions are linked to the community outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community having ownership of the identified outcomes</td>
<td>Community and stakeholders interviewed are aware of the community outcomes. However, some question whether there is awareness among the wider community. There appears to be little evidence of extensive ownership of the community outcomes. Some stakeholders use the community outcomes to support positions put forward in their submissions and proposals to Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater accountability between local authorities and their communities</td>
<td>Council is seeking to be more transparent and accountable through linkages to community outcomes in the LTCCP and all Council reports.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote better co-ordination and application of community resource</td>
<td>Too early to comment</td>
</tr>
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80. In summary, Waimakariri District Council undertook an extensive and rigorous community outcomes process. The community outcomes developed in 2005 were an evolution of visioning and strategy development undertaken by the Council with the Waimakariri community over the last decade. Perceived benefits from the development of the community outcomes build on earlier visioning work through confirmation of Council’s direction and decision-making being linked to community desired outcomes through use of reporting templates and importantly increased links to other agencies who can contribute to achieving the community outcomes. Waimakariri District Council acknowledged further work was needed to increase awareness and understanding of the community outcomes, and to revalidate future Council directions with their community.
Strategic Planning (LTCCP)

Legislative intent

“...The LTCCP describes the community outcomes and priorities and the activities the local authority will undertake to contribute to the outcomes. The plan is designed to integrate decision-making and include information on the key policies of the local authority. It also describes linkages between activities and how they are funded.”

Included in the LTCCP are financial reporting requirements. Significant examples of this include making “adequate and effective provision for expenditure” by showing estimates for the next ten years of the Council’s activities. The LTCCP includes statements of service performance and shows from what sources of Council revenue they will be funded. An LTCCP is auditable as are any amendments to it. The Annual Plan reports a Council’s progress to the LTCCP.

An authority must consult its "wider communities" over its LTCCP. The Act states that the authority must use a Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) to consult, although a Council can use other consultation methods in addition to this.\(^7\)

Waimakariri District Council LTCCP – overview of response to the legislation

81. Waimakariri District Council had a long-term planning process in place before the introduction of the LGA. As a result, the council did not consider the LTCCP, as a 10 year plan, to be a new concept. However, it is seen to have caused significant change to the processes and the amount of time required to develop the long-term plan. A Council officer explained that they saw the council as “effectively [preparing] an LTCCP every year at least in terms of what the officers do.” If it is an Annual Plan year then the public will see “only the Annual Plan side of it” unless there is some sort of significant change or an amendment.

82. Councillors appear to have two contrasting perceptions of the LTCCP. On the one hand, some councillors warmly embraced the LTCCP as it offers a clear direction on where the Council is heading and how the Council and its activities will be funded. On the other hand, other councillors perceived the LTCCP as a straight jacket preventing innovative change.

Waimakariri District Council’s LTCCP development process

83. Waimakariri District Council engaged in what appears to them is a lengthy process to develop their LTCCP. As noted by a council officer, effectively Waimakariri District Council prepares an LTCCP every year with the exception of not presenting it to the public as such.

84. Commencing in 2005, the LTCCP took about a year to complete. Appendix Two contains a detailed schematic of the development process of the 2006/16 LTCCP, which shows the inter-linkages between the key development stages summarised below.

- April–November 2005: Preparing the community outcomes and follow-up (as detailed in the previous section) and confirming with Council the timetable for the LTCCP
- April 2005–February 2006: Planning and budgeting for the LTCCP including:
  - Water/ sanitary services assessment and Assessment Management Plan preparation

\(^7\) Quoted/paraphrased from the “Strategy for Evaluating Local Government”, Department of Internal Affairs, 2005, page 9.
— Roading Assessment Management Plan development and consultation
— Review and develop LTCCP templates
— Develop and assemble draft budgets and LTCCP documents
— Collate and review first cut of budget

- July–December 2005: Policy review and development including review of financial funding and other LTCCP policies
- July–December 2005: Significant issues and decisions including assembling information on possible significant issues and decisions for Council review
- February–July 2006: Consultation and finalisation of the LTCCP (described in detail below).

85. The development of the LTCCP commenced with development of financials by the Management Team, progressed through the various Committee Chairs and then to full Council for debate and adoption of the draft plan. At this meeting, the councillors reviewed the total budget for the LTCCP. Lower-end financial discussions are resolved in the relevant committees, minuted and then circulated to councillors who are able to reopen the discussion, if they want. Issues that could not be resolved at a committee level were sent to the full Council for debate.

86. A council officer noted that significant work went into developing the first LTCCP, specifically this entailed the development of policies, specifying value of assets, and separating out capital expenditure into renewal, growth or no growth. The Treasury Policy was also updated by an ANZ Bank consultant and is now seen to be more prescriptive than the Act’s requirements.

87. A council officer noted that the main areas of process change were: changes in rating liability and liability management policies, review of management policies, changes to debt management, undertaking development contributions and the level of consultation on the plan.

88. Council officers noted that Ward Committees and Community Boards had significant input into the LTCCP development. To support this, there was a workshop with the Ward Committees and Community Boards to identify what they wanted to incorporate or change in the LTCCP.

89. Waimakariri District Council lodged its draft 2006/16 LTCCP with Audit New Zealand before Christmas 2005, and was one of the first 2006/16 LTCCPs to be audited.

**LTCCP consultation process**

90. As required by the Act, Waimakariri District Council consulted on their draft LTCCP from 20 February 2006 for a six-week period.

91. A summary draft report was developed using a format agreed with the auditors. The report includes any matters considered to be important and of interest for the community and Council, as the Act requires.

92. Waimakariri District Council sought to make the draft LTCCP more accessible to the community by creating four volumes:
   1. The summary
   2. Community outcomes
   3. Council’s contribution to community outcomes
   4. Council policies

93. This strategy proved successful in assisting submitters and councillors to be clear about the issues under discussion. Comments from community stakeholders confirmed the LTCCP was easy to read and understand.

94. The following methods were used to ensure awareness of and wide distribution of the draft plan:

- Copies of the plan were distributed to organisations likely to be interested in the proposals
Copies of the draft plan were available to take away from Council Service points in both paper and in a CD format.

An extended summary of the plan appeared in the local media with the potential to reach all residents on 21-22 February 2006.

Absentee and overseas ratepayers were written to individually advising them of the plan’s availability.

95. Waimakariri District Council received 981 submissions during the consultation period, and four late submissions. All submission were analysed for the points made in them and each point was subject to staff appraisal and recommendation where appropriate. A report of the advice in the submissions was prepared for Council consideration. Seventy-five submitters indicated a desire to present their submissions in person. The Council heard these submissions over a period of three days. All advice received through the submission process was then debated by Council and excluded or included in the LTCCP.

96. The summarised advice was made available to the submitters on request and forms part of the public record of proceedings of Council considerations of submissions and their resolutions to confirm or modify the draft plan. All submitters received a letter advising them of the relevant Council decisions and reasons for them.

97. As noted in the LTCCP Volume A, some submissions addressed matters beyond the scope of the LTCCP, such as District Plan matters, and these comments were considered through other processes.

98. The LTCCP Volume A mentioned that following consideration of submissions 17 key decisions in relation to the draft plan were made, for example “confirmed provision of $7.2 million in 2008/09 for a new indoor swimming pool at Dudley Park and the permanent closure of the existing outdoor pool.”

99. In the LTCCP, the then Mayor commented the independent auditing of the LTCCP offers the community confidence the proposals in the plan are a reasonable basis for long-term decision-making.

**LTCCP monitoring**

100. Progress of the LTCCP is monitored by both Policy and Strategy and Finance teams against the performance measures.

**LTCCP benefits**

101. To reiterate, Waimakariri District Council already had a ten year planning process in place before the introduction of the LGA. As a result, the process of developing a long-term plan was not perceived to be new one. However, council officers and councillors acknowledged the LTCCP process has embedded a rigorous planning discipline and sign-off process in Waimakariri District Council. Key benefits from this process are a clear understanding by staff of what they are required to do and greater transparency and accountability to the community.

102. Some stakeholders reported that consultation on the LTCCP offered them a ‘real say’ in Council decision-making.

**Greater transparency and accountability for the community**

103. The development of the LTCCP made more visible many of the Council’s policies. Council officers and councillors commented there is greater transparency and more accountability to communities as “large amounts of paper are now being put out to say what the Council is doing and intends to do.”

104. Council officers believed by having the LTCCP the community is able to receive a much more honest response to queries about their projects, “e.g; it will happen in 2012,” rather than being told to try again next annual planning round, and the next. This creates two possible responses from the stakeholder either delight at being in the plan and/or disappointment the project will not occur to 2012. Regardless of response, the stakeholder has greater clarity on whether their project is in the plan and if in, its proposed timeframe. In essence, council officers and councillors perceived the LTCCP ensures a ‘no surprises approach’ for the community, as well as creating greater buy in to the Council’s direction.
Key reference point for staff and councillors

105. One council officer noted the LTCCP is a critical reference point for staff on what they need to deliver over the next three years. As the council officers explained, the LTCCP drives the long-term projects such as Rangiora water upgrade and the $60 million roading upgrade. Projects that would be extremely challenging to work into a one year annual plan cycle.

106. Councillors describe the LTCCP as the framework for planning; a document that tends to be near at hand when considering Council directions and issues.

Offering community a ‘real’ say

107. Business and community stakeholders perceived the consultation process on the LTCCP offered them a “real say” in Council’s long-term direction. However, some of these informants considered that at times Council’s consultation is perceived as excessive for some relatively “trifling matters.”

LTCCP issues

108. Council officers, councillors and stakeholders identified a number of issues relating to the LTCCP. Across participants, questions were raised about whether the LTCCP actually focuses on the long-term. Council staff, in particular identified a number of issues about the development of the LTCCP. Stakeholders also commented on appropriateness and consultation overload. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

Focus of LTCCP

LTCCP short or long-term focus?

109. Some council officers, councillors and community stakeholders queried whether the LTCCP does take a long-term strategic direction, given it can be amended at any time. These comments centred on the newly elected Council scaling back activities in the LTCCP, in particular the proposed swimming pool. Stakeholders were critical of the Council undertaking further community consultation, given the initial intensity of consultation about the future of the pool – “they are re-debating and it is not on!” These participants believed decisions made though a significant community consultation process should survive the election of a new Council, and not be relitigated.

110. One council officer expanded on this theme noting that they saw the intention of the Act was to have changes occurring to the LTCCP every three years and not every year. Consequently, they queried whether the legislation is so “different from the short-term ad-hoc decision-making of the past.”

Development issues

Significant time needed to prepare and burden of cost

111. The Waimakariri District Council LTCCP took a significant amount of time to prepare. One council officer said planning to prepare the LTCCP commences one year from its adoption. This is greater time and cost than the council’s previous strategic planning scheme, and much of this increase is attributed, by council informants, to auditing requirements of the LTCCP, community outcomes and LTCCP amendments. Council officers commented that auditing costs have doubled in recent times. Further, officers queried the rationale for auditing amendments and variations to the LTCCP, given they have to be reported to the community.

Level of understanding of the LTCCP

112. A council officer highlighted Schedule 10 requirements of the LGA for the activity sections of the LTCCP require significant amounts of information to be completed. However, the only submitters who referred to the activity sections have been central government agencies suggesting the council employ different performance measures. Consequently, council officers wondered, given all the effort and information in the LTCCP to meet requirements of the Act and audit, how many people in the community actually read and understand it.
113. Council officers perceive the amount of information in the LTCCP creates confusion for the community. It also creates more work for community groups trying to read and absorb this information and then make a “worthwhile” submission. Based on submissions from general community groups, it appears most read the sections of relevance to them and then prepare the submission. These officers perceive little change in the submissions the council receives, since there has been more information available to the community with the introduction of the LTCCP.

Complex performance measurement

114. Council officers felt that the performance measures in the LTCCP do not speak to the needs of the community. They believe these performance measures were written to the specialised and technical requirements of asset and activity management plans and more especially to meet audit requirements. These officers perceive the complexity of the performance measures make it difficult for the community to understand how they link to the community outcomes. As a result, complaints have been received from the community about the technical nature of the performance measures.

115. It was suggested that Schedule 10 could be slimmed down so that key levels of service and performance measures contained in the Asset and Activity Management Plans are emphasised through the LTCCP, where they specifically indicate levels of service meeting the needs of the public. Consequently, other asset management information disclosure requirements could be refocused to show key aspects of the asset performance in relation to services delivered. This would therefore change the emphasis within Schedule 10 to drive disclosures that better reflect community expectation of service delivery.

More explicit trade-offs

116. Asset Management Plans were the building blocks of the LTCCP. As one councillor noted Asset Management Plans can be developed with little consideration to the wider Council activities, that is, their development can occur in a silo. As a result, it seems possible to this councillor that little consideration may be given to how asset management contributed to rate increases and what trade-offs could be made to manage this.

117. The LTCCP was the only Council tool which seeks to examine activities across the breadth of Council. The councillors felt the discussions on potential trade-offs needs to commence earlier than the LTCCP and be occurring at the Asset Management Plan level.

Timing of LTCCP in the election cycle

118. Currently, the Waimakariri LTCCP is released in year two of the three year election cycle, and not year one as recommended in the Rates Inquiry8. A council officer perceived this recommendation from the review as misguided, because they considered new councillors with no local government experience, would likely struggle with the demands of the LTCCP during their first year as a councillor. The council officer believed the current positioning of the LTCCP development in the middle year of the election cycle enables councillors to gain an understanding and experience before commencing LTCCP deliberations.

Consultation issues

More targeted Māori engagement

119. Feedback from the Rūnanga indicated the need for more culturally appropriate consultation processes to ensure Māori perspectives feed into the LTCCP. Members of the Rūnanga mentioned that Māori do not want to participate in workshops that are not located in their communities. As a member explained

“our cry was we would not go to Ngai Tahu or Rangiora. I would not go tell them what they should do in their area.”

Consultation overload

120. Rūnanga and business stakeholders reported being overloaded with requests to engage in a range of local, regional and national consultation. Consequently, they were unable to respond to all requests and were proactively selecting issues in which they would engage.

121. Conversely, the Council now has to manage a more detailed and exact submission process, which places significant burden on staff. A council officer commented, the submission process is now much more detailed than before the introduction of the Act. As a result, a sophisticated database has been developed to make the submission process more streamline and effective.

Management of historical frictions

122. One council officer said it was hoped the LTCCP, through its transparency, would address some of the long-standing frictions that existed between communities before the Council’s amalgamation. Unfortunately, it appears this has not occurred, even though the LTCCP demonstrates where and how services are provided and allocated across the different communities.

123. Community stakeholders who were interviewed continued to express concerns about the parochial nature of Council decision-making, although some expressed this may now change due to the election of ‘new’ councillors. Examples they pointed to include the perceived lack of focus by the Council on the infrastructure and town expansion planning needs of Oxford and Kaiapoi. Regardless of the work undertaken by the Council to ensure participation, these stakeholders believed the Council was not listening to “what is important to communities.” For them, this belief was validated by many councillors losing their Council seat in the last election.

Impact of the LTCCP

124. As the Council already had a ten year strategic planning scheme, the adoption of LTCCP was not seen as a new concept to Waimakariri District by the council informants we spoke with. Consequently, the introduction of the LTCCP was seen by these informants to have largely impacted processes and related flow-on effects.

125. The LTCCP’s more rigorous planning processes and the greater amount of information put out to the community appears to have resulted in greater transparency and certainty for staff and the community about Council’s activities over the long-term. However, the limited use by the community and the new Council re-examining the swimming pool proposal may be eroding this perception.

126. The significant burden that council officers perceive the LTCCP to have placed upon them may have the unintended effect of taking them away from other Council activities.

Future LTCCPs

127. Waimakariri District Council’s embracing of long-term planning and their management focus on striving for best practice was demonstrated in a number of initiatives being considered to enhance the LTCCP process and final documentation. Initiatives mainly focus on enhancing community consultation processes and the accessibility of information to stakeholders.

Enhancing consultation processes

Tailoring the submission processes to Treaty partners

128. At the annual hui, the Council discovered the Rūnanga preferred to make verbal submissions. The Council is now considering how to deliver on this preference, while meeting their needs for written documentation of submissions received. Initial considerations by the Council are meeting the Rūnanga
on a number of occasions to hear their submissions on the LTCCP, followed by a sign off process with the Rūnanga on what the Council has written down.

Pre-LTCCP consultation

129. In the 2009/19 LTCCP, Waimakariri District Council plans to introduce a pre-LTCCP consultation process to gain the input of affected stakeholders’ before staff commence the formal costings and proposal development around the LTCCP. As an example, one of the issues to be consulted on in this manner are five different options for the economic development role of the Council. Discussions with the stakeholders will explore the costs, benefits and evaluation of the options before they are developed by staff for inclusion in the draft LTCCP.

130. As council officers reflected, the pre-LTCCP consultations will be the first round of the community consultations.

Enhancing Council’s information to stakeholders

Making the LTCCP more accessible

131. A council staff member acknowledged, improvements can be made to the LTCCP summary document. As noted, Waimakariri District Council prepared the summary document on completion of the other three LTCCP volumes. While the summary document was not an afterthought, they note it was prepared at the end of the full LTCCP process when staff were tired and this may have affected the quality of the summary.

Improving feedback to stakeholders

132. Stakeholders also commented that they wanted the feedback they receive on their submissions improved. The existing Council feedback was described as neutral and courteous, and a mechanism to prevent criticism of Council’s decision-making - that is, they perceive the feedback is used to close down an issue, rather than adding value through furthering a discussion or relationship building. Stakeholders were therefore seeking submission feedback to be more specific to their issues and the related Council decisions, and to invite further dialogue.

Other one-off mentioned initiatives

More linkage to other agencies

133. One council officer said they would, ideally, like to see a companion report to the LTCCP, which details the responses from other organisations over a three-year period. However, they acknowledged getting central government agencies to make this sort of three-year commitment could be very challenging.

Need for longer term financial view

134. One council officer and a councillor reflected on whether the LTCCP timeframe of ten years is too short. They reflected on Waimakariri District Council’s growing population and considered future large development projects like the Arts and Culture Centre, a regional museum and other 25 year assets that are not currently reflected in the LTCCP. The council officer pondered whether the legislation needs to request Councils to articulate more clearly year 11 and onwards. This reflects that at present the activities that are “too hard to handle are put in year 11 and never actually make it into the LTCCP.” In contrast, the councillor suggested a 15 or 25 year plan.
Waimakariri District Council LTCCP against legislative intent

135. The table below summarises the legislative intent of the Act regarding the LTCCP and Waimakariri District Council’s implementation of the requirements. This table refers to the 2006/16 LTCCP prepared by Waimakariri District Council, which was the first full LTCCP required under the new Act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative intent</th>
<th>Waimakariri District Council response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LTCCP describes community outcomes and shows local authorities contribution to them</td>
<td>LTCCP Volume A 2006/16 contains tables showing the links between the community outcomes and Waimakariri District Council’s roles and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Wider community” is consulted on the LTCCP</td>
<td>The Council undertook significant consultation with key stakeholders and the community using a range of mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTCCP is auditable and meets important financial reporting requirements.</td>
<td>The LTCCP has been audited and found to be a reasonable basis for long-term integrated decision-making by the Council</td>
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136. In summary, Waimakariri District Council’s LTCCP fulfils the requirements of the Act. The Council officers see the council as, in effect, preparing an LTCCP every year, and consulting with the community on the draft plan. Internally, the LTCCP development process is perceived as embedding a rigorous planning discipline and sign-off process in the Council. For council staff and councillors, the LTCCP is a key reference point for planning Council activity; one which offers the community greater transparency on Council’s long-term activities. However, having to re-consult on decisions already agreed in the LTCCP is, to some extent, seen as eroding the perception of the LTCCP as a long-term strategic plan.

137. According to participants, looking to the future and enhancing the utility of the LTCCP, Waimakariri District Council is seeking to encourage more community engagement in its development through initiatives such as pre-LTCCP consultation. Focus is also being placed on making the LTCCP more accessible and meaningful for their community.

Decision-Making

Legislative intent

"The Act requires local authorities to be more rigorous in their decision-making [than prior to the new Act] by identifying all reasonably practicable options for achieving the objective of a decision and assessing those options by considering the benefits and costs in terms of the present and future well-being of the community, and the extent to which community outcomes would be promoted. Depending on the significance, local authorities are also required to consider the impact of each option on their capacity to meet present and future needs in relation to their statutory responsibilities."

Local authorities must be rigorous in their decision-making by identifying all practicable options for achieving an objective or resolving a problem. The costs and benefits of these options have to be evaluated against the achievement of the community outcomes and the present and future well-being of the community.

When making a decision a local authority must consider if consultation of “interested and affected parties” is required. The authority must undertake that consultation in accordance with certain principles, which broadly speaking, require the authority to:

- provide easy-to-understand summaries of proposals and plans (such as the LTCCP);
• identify who will be affected by decisions and encourage them to make their views known to the Council – Councils also must give reasons for their decisions;
• find out what all the practical options are for dealing with issues and carefully assess them.

A local authority has discretion in deciding how it interprets and meets the decision-making requirements of the Act. This discretion can be applied in terms of the significance of the decision. A Council must develop a policy on significance that indicates what triggers must occur before undertaking a decision (although a Council is not prevented from undertaking analysis or consulting on a decision that does not trigger this policy).

The Act also places requirements on Council’s to involve Māori in their decision-making (especially regarding land and water), and to consider ways to foster Māori contribution to their decision-making processes.9

### Waimakariri District Council’s approach to decision-making

138. Council officers of Waimakariri District Council were applying the decision-making provisions under the LGA. Historically, Waimakariri District Council sees its use of the decision-making principles as, like the long-term strategic planning requirements around the LT CCP, pre-dating the introduction of the LGA. The council informants cite the decision-making process applied to the Sewerage Treatment and Disposal Project undertaken between 2000 and 2003. A four stage decision-making process was applied which included:

1. Identifying key stakeholders and affected and interested people and identifying potential sewage treatment and disposal options
2. Exploring with affected parties the proposed options and their technical implications
3. Putting the three options and the Council’s preferred option out for consultation
4. Reflecting by Council on the submissions received to inform their decision-making10.

139. The introduction of the LGA therefore institutionalised a decision-making process already in place at Waimakariri District Council. A Member’s Guide to the Waimakariri District Council (September 2006, p21) demonstrates the Council’s application of the Act’s decision-making process. Section 11 details the Consultation Policy, which explains when the Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) is used. The latter mirrored the requirements of the Act and noted the Council will use the SCP in other circumstances as required.

140. The Council must follow the SCP before it:

- Adopts a LTCCP or Annual Plan
- Amends an LTCCP
- Adopts, revokes, reviews or amends a bylaw
- Changes the mode of delivery for a significant activity that is not provided for in an LTCCP (for example, changes from Council delivery to delivery by a Council Controlled Organisation, from a Council Controlled Organisation to another organisation or person).
- The Council may be required to use the SCP under other legislation and it may use this procedure in other circumstances if it wishes to do so.

141. The policy also detailed the application steps of the SCP:

10 [http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/projects/sewerage/reports/Section4-Consultation.pdf](http://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/projects/sewerage/reports/Section4-Consultation.pdf)
1. Preparing a statement of proposal and a summary to distribute throughout the community
2. Putting a Public Notice in one or more daily newspapers
3. Receiving submissions and acknowledge the receipt of all written submissions and offer submitters a reasonable opportunity to make an oral submission
4. Deliberating in public on the proposal or hear submissions
5. Decision-making which requires the Council to give a copy of relevant decisions and the reasons for those decisions.

142. As required by Section 5 of the LGA, Waimakariri District Council has developed a Significance Policy, which determines appropriate responses to decisions or issues arising.

143. The bulk of Waimakariri District Council’s consultation around its decision-making occurred in the initial development of and SCP for, the Annual Plan and LTCCP. One council officer offered an example of the SCP being triggered due to changes in the proposed timing to implement the Oxford Water Scheme Upgrade initially proposed for 2009. The Council was seeking to bring the project forward so it could access a $1.2 million government subsidy. This potential shift in timeframe triggered a SCP to ensure the group of ratepayers affected were advised of the change. For these ratepayers, the shift in timing means their rate increase will commence one year earlier than expected (or signalled in the LTCCP). To inform the affected ratepayers, the Council placed information in the rate demand, in the local newspaper and also at service centres of the proposed amendment to LTCCP.

144. A council officer felt this example highlights a difficulty associated with the requirement for a ten-year timeframe in the LTCCP and the related formal procedures in the Act. Specifically, this officer noted that central government was requiring a level of forward planning from the Council that it does not itself undertake meaning that one of the most difficult areas for the Council to predict in advance was when/if central government was likely to release funds to local government. To this officer this presents particular difficulties when the funds are ‘one-off’ grants, or for specific projects announced by the Government in its Budget which often have to be taken up quickly.

145. Council officers identified one of the main problems they perceive with the LGA 2002 framework for local government was that it adopted a managerial ‘strategic planning’ approach, which is not easily reconciled with political processes – in particular the triennial elections. To these officers, it seemed this new approach could conflict with the expectation of recently elected representatives (at both local and national levels of government), and their electors, that they will be able to make changes to their government’s programmes and start new initiatives.

Community engagement in the decision-making process

146. Waimakariri District Council has a long history of community engagement in its decision-making processes predating the LGA 2002. A survey conducted in 2007, indicated around 10% of the population engaged in at least one of the Council’s consultations in the last year.

147. As noted, council officers have developed what they consider to be detailed and transparent processes to manage the submissions processes, ensure analytical rigour and feedback to submitters on their submission together with Council’s decision and its rationale. As one council officer explained all the key points arising from each submission are presented to Council and a decision is required on each point.

148. To create awareness of key issues and encourage community participation, Waimakariri District Council uses a standard two page spread in the local newspaper. Through this media many issues of interest, such as the swimming pool, from the LTCCP or Annual Plan are reported to the public.

149. The Council also uses more targeted consultation to ensure the inclusion of affected communities in decision-making. For more localised issues, such as a water scheme which effects 20 to 30 community members, the tendency is to distribute a questionnaire about the service change to give an opportunity to respond to the proposed options.
150. The Council also carries out a triennial customer satisfaction survey for residents to give their views on the performance of the Council and on other issues. For more prescribed changes to rating policy, Waimakariri District Council has details to its staff each step in the decision-making process. Over the years, the process has become more explicit, which has made it more streamlined.

**Rūnanga’s engagement in the decision-making process**

151. In 2003, the Council formally acknowledged the hapu and whānau of Ngai Tuahuriri as tangata whenua for the Waimakariri District, and their collective concerns as facilitated by the Rūnanga structure back to Te Rūnanga o Ngai Tahu. In 2003, the Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Te Ngai Tuahuriri Rūnanga. The District Plan, in Chapter 2, contains a number of policies relating to Māori relationships with ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga. LTCCP Volume 2 (2006/16, p46) noted:

“The Council will be guided in its efforts to develop Māori capacity to contribute to decision-making processes by the provisions of the MOU with Te Ngai Tuahuriri Rūnanga. It will develop or enable the MOU provisions as practicable, appropriate and subject to available resourcing. Within the MOU framework, Council wishes to see the relationship with the Rūnanga continue to develop through mutual commitment and support.”

152. As noted in the MOU, there continues to be a Monthly Forum meeting between Rūnanga and Council staff representatives. The Rūnanga have developed a list of projects and topics for the Council to focus on at these meetings. The Rūnanga commented the meetings are being held and attended by both senior council officers and councillors. As one member of the Rūnanga commented “we are a face-to-face people and it’s been a good process.”

153. An annual hui is also held to review the MOU and develop joint or shared projects, and to provide opportunities for the Rūnanga to recommend projects for consideration by Council as part of development of, and consultation on, the LTCCP. Thirty seven people attended the annual hui in February 2008 held at a local Marae. A member of the Rūnanga explained “it was a very successful meeting...a lot of people didn’t know the councillors or the staff so it was good for everybody to know who these people are.” Discussed at the hui was the Council using the Rūnanga’s Christchurch based company to feed into their decision-making, the need for capacity building and an Iwi Management Plan.

154. In LTCCP Volume 2 (2006/16, p46), the Council noted its intent:

“To initiate a particular focus on providing more training opportunities for Rūnanga members to facilitate their involvement in the decision-making processes of Council. It will also formalise an internal liaison function so as to provide greater support to both organisations at an administrative level.”

155. Based on discussions with the Council and the Rūnanga, a liaison officer has been appointed offering administrative support for both organisations to aid in developing the relationship. Training opportunities have been promoted to the Rūnanga in the past without any involvement occurring. Recently, a Rūnanga member has accepted involvement in a training seminar that is currently being organised.

**Decision-making benefits**

156. Waimakariri District Council sees itself as having applied decision-making principles akin to those in the Act before its introduction. Further, the Council had taken proactive steps to include the Rūnanga and other community stakeholders in the decision-making process. Consequently, the council sees the benefits from the LGA’s decision-making, in its case, as preceding the LGA, although the benefits are those the Act intended.
Council officers and councillors perceived the Act has institutionalised and standardised its decision-making process and associated community engagement. As with the LTCCP, community engagement in decision-making is perceived to have increased the Council’s transparency and accountability to the community.

One councillor perceived the LGA as a shift from representative to participatory democracy where the community is more involved in Council decision-making. In effect, the councillor perceived the community as having been given the power to veto Council decisions. This councillor noted the value of community involvement as ensuring the Council takes a wider perspective in decision-making processes. The councillor said submissions to the Council do influence its final decision-making, when a well considered proposal is put forward. However, it was acknowledged, this does not often happen. They noted that given the tiers of consultation the Council goes through in decision-making, changes in decision-making may be occurring earlier in the process when options are being developed and discussed.

A member of the Rūnanga also described an event they saw as demonstrating Council’s willingness to listen and change practice at an operational level. The Council adopted new operational practice following a suggestion from a member of the Rūnanga who discovered hundreds of dying eels after they had been dumped onto a road when ditches were being cleaned. They noted the Council has responded to this:

“someone (now) goes along (with a digger) and puts whatever fish comes out back in the river … that’s a great example … of Council recognising our interests in water and the food that’s in water. And recognising that they have a job to do to clear it out or whatever it is. And that we can work together. (Rūnanga)

Decision-making issues

A number of issues were raised about decision-making by council officers, councillors, Rūnanga and stakeholders. Rūnanga commented on being Treaty Partners and not stakeholders and also the burden of consultation. Council staff and stakeholders commented on tensions relating to the Council being perceived as relitigating agreed decisions, and issues relating to community consultation in decision-making.

Rūnanga feedback

Rūnanga are Treaty partners not stakeholders

A member of the Rūnanga commented the Council tends to position the Rūnanga with other community stakeholders and not as a Treaty partner.

“We are not the only Māori to say that we are not stakeholders here. We are partners... We need to educate people about the Treaty because we are meant to be looking after things together...It is well and good for the Council to take rates and to pay their wages to do that. We see ourselves as partners. ... Having some teeth to that dialogue … turning dialogue into action.”

Burden on Rūnanga not acknowledged

The Rūnanga also noted that involvement in Council decision-making placed a significant and unrecognised burden on them. The reason for this is that the Rūnanga’s feedback is being sought by many other local and regional Councils. Consequently, the Rūnanga is spending many hours on processing information to provide feedback with no remuneration or administrative support.

They perceived the burden of meeting the consultation demand as falling on older retired Māori women whose family have grown up, as the young people are out “financing their families, working hard and haven’t got time to do it.” Consequently, the Rūnanga was only able to give limited time to consider the range of information and consultation papers coming to them from Waimakariri District Council and other neighbouring Councils.
164. Ideally, the Rūnanga would like to see more support for building its capability, as well as remuneration to employ a qualified person to develop its responses to requests for consultation. The Rūnanga also noted the need for more time to be made available for them to review the material for consultation and gather wider community input. To address this burden, the Rūnanga, at the annual hui, requested Waimakariri District Council to sign up to their Christchurch company to prepare feedback for decision-making.

**Tensions in re-debating agreed decisions**

165. The LTCCP set a clear direction for the Council, which identified a rate increase of around 14% to deliver initiatives such as a new swimming pool and water schemes. The 2007 election resulted in a significant change to the make-up of Council as a number of new councillors were elected on a “low rate ticket.” The new Council gave council officers the instruction of keeping rates increases to a maximum of four to five percent. To achieve this lower rate increase, the councillors decided to delay the building of the new swimming pool and other proposed water schemes. This decision was contrary to the communities’ feedback during the draft LTCCP consultation conducted before the election of the new councillors. The decision to delay building the new swimming pool is being consulted on in the current 2008/09 Annual Plan.

166. Councillors argued they had an elected mandate to reduce rates so the decision to delay the building of the swimming pool and water scheme was appropriate. In contrast, business and some community stakeholders perceived that the newly elected Council as not adhering to the projects already agreed in the 2006/16 LTCCP. Some stakeholders were therefore questioning the value of their input into decision-making (through consultation on the LTCCP) if a new Council can significantly change the already agreed Council direction. In contrast, community groups outside of Ranigora commended the council’s decision to review how the pool and other large ticket items were being funded and the consequent impact on rate increases across the District.

167. A council officer explained that the new Council has not fundamentally changed the LTCCP rather “they have sliced and diced the capital programme and indicated different ways of implementing these flagship programmes.” In the current draft Annual Plan, the Council has signalled the fiscal parameters for the LTCCP in 2009/19 if councillors are to achieve their elected mandate of remaining within the desired rates envelope. As a result, many of the more costly projects have not been removed from the LTCCP, instead differing options have been put forward for the timing of their development and nature of their implementation (i.e. water projects will proceed but it is the when and where that may be changing). There are other projects, such as continuing the rural seal extension programme that have been deleted from the LTCCP, and replaced with a much smaller budget allowance.

**Consultation issues**

**Lack of community engagement and understanding**

168. A councillor noted, while the LGA may be perceived as a shift to participatory decision-making, some community submitters appeared to believe that the Council was bound to adopt their submission on particular issues.

169. Another councillor was disappointed in the level of community engagement across the range of Council activities. The example was given of only five people submitting on a $15 million water upgrade project, versus numerous submissions on cutting down a tree. However, as noted large infrastructure decisions were consulted on using a range of mechanisms including Council surveys of affected people.

**Presenting to Council**

170. One stakeholder criticised the process of presenting submissions to Council as being overly hostile. As a result, the stakeholder’s level of interest in preparing submissions has waned.
Consultation too prescriptive and inflexible

171. Some council officers commented the LGA was supposed to be an enabling legislation and undo the prescriptiveness of the previous Act. However, they think the reverse seems to have happened in that the Council must consult with the community often and the method of consultation has become prescribed. Further, they perceive the Act as having required a larger number of SCPs, which is in turn creating significantly more work for Council.

172. As one council officer explained, if Waimakariri District Council is seeking to establish a Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) there is likely to be a number of legal and technical reasons why it is needed. However, the Council is required by the Act to undertake an SCP. To this officer, in most cases, regardless of the community consultation, the CCO will probably happen, especially if other Councils are also involved. This raised the question in the mind of this officer as to why the Council needs to consult on these matters when the submissions received will not substantively change the outcome.

173. While the LGA is lauded by the council informants for formalising the processes for long-term decision making, they find themselves frustrated by what they consider to be inflexibility in its application. A council staff commented that if the legislation is meant to be enabling, more discretion is needed for Council to engage in a SCP or “alternatively the focus should be on best practice rather than one standardised process for everything.”

Impacts of the Act on decision-making

174. Identifying the LGA’s effects on Waimakariri District Council’s decision-making is challenging as the Council had already adopted similar decision-making processes prior to the Act’s introduction. Discussions with council officers had noted some effects, specifically the process is more cautious and decisions are more strategic than before the Act. As a council officer explained, decisions were more strategic due to the LGA processes creating more linkages to strategic consequences as well as rigorous description and evaluation of options:

“Who are the affected communities? What are their views? What are the options? Where is the statutory framework point of reference? What is the policy or delegated reference for the decision-making?”

175. This process was seen to have made “huge in-roads into the quality [of] decision-making”, and created a safety net to lessen the risk of rogue decisions. However, the officer acknowledged this may be perceived by some as “provider capture as the Council can't make a decision without us.” This is mirrored in feedback from a community stakeholder who commented that “there is still huge confusion between things determined by council staff and things determined by councillors ie the limitations of governance.”

176. Representatives of the Rūnanga commented that while their involvement in decision-making is sought, little has changed for their people in relation to service levels for road, sewage and water quality. Council officers acknowledged the Rūnanga are seeking resolution of local issues relating to rural road sealing, water and sewage, however this is subject to budget constraints. One member of the Rūnanga suggested “there is a lot of room for improvement in terms of turning the intent of the MOU into action.” It was noted that following the Annual Plan decision-making process in 2008, a long-standing request from the Rūnanga to seal a rural road of special cultural significance, (i.e. the road is key in accessing the local Urupa), has been met by the Council.

177. Stakeholders held mixed perceptions about their ability to have greater input into Council decision-making. Some stakeholders felt councillors are simply not listening because they are either overly focused on Rangiora or re-debating the agreed swimming pool decision. One stakeholder felt that the Council “continues to be secretive and is getting better at covering its tracks.”
Waimakariri District Council’s decision-making against legislative intent

178. It is difficult to judge how the Act has been applied within a particular Council without examining every decision made by a Council – which is outside the scope of this report. Below are three intents of the Act’s section on decision-making that this report can offer some feedback on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative intent</th>
<th>Waimakariri District Council response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve community involvement in Council decision-making</td>
<td>Community has continued to be involved in Council decision-making. However, some stakeholders felt the Council is not listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council decisions will be more strategic (including a longer-term focus) in nature</td>
<td>Council officers perceived that decision-making is more rigorous and strategic. However, re-debating the swimming pool decision was undermining this perception with stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve Māori in decision-making and help develop Māori capacity to contribute to Council decisions</td>
<td>The Rūnanga were involved in decision-making through monthly meetings and an annual hui. However, Rūnanga perceived that they are not being treated as a Treaty Partner. Rūnanga are consider themselves over-burdened with requests for consultation. An alternative mechanism has therefore been suggested by the Rūnanga to gain their input via the Council signing up to their Christchurch company The Rūnanga feels it has seen little assistance from the council in building its capacity as it has not responded to the Rūnanga’s suggested training opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

179. In summary, Waimakariri District Council sees itself as having applied the decision-making principles of the Act before its introduction, much the same as it did with the provisions around community outcomes and the Long-Term Council Community Plan. However, the formalisation of the decision process as defined by the Act has made decision-making more strategic and lessened the risk of rogue decisions. Some stakeholders noted that, regardless of the Act’s decision-making process, it appears there continues to be some confusion among stakeholders over the roles and powers of governance (councillors) and management (council officers).

180. It appears that Waimakariri District Council was taken proactive steps to engage their community, key stakeholders and the Rūnanga in its decision-making process. However, consultation as defined in the Act is perceived as too prescriptive and inflexible by council informants.
Conclusions

In general

181. Waimakariri District Council faces challenges of providing for significant population growth together with a desire for higher service levels from both government regulation and the community. Acknowledging these challenges, Waimakariri District Council commenced the development of a long-term strategic visioning process based on extensive community consultation, in the 1990s. The introduction of the LGA was seen therefore to very much align with Waimakariri District Council’s existing culture of community engagement in defining the Council’s strategic direction and decision-making.

Community outcomes

182. The introduction of the community outcomes process was perceived by Waimakariri District Council as a continuation of the visioning work undertaken in the 1990s. In 2005, the Council went back to its community to develop the community outcomes from the ground up, via an extensive community and stakeholder engagement process. The outcomes identified through this process resembled to a large extent those already identified in the 1990s.

183. For Waimakariri District Council the development of the community outcomes offered further confirmation that Council direction already aligned with their community’s. This link to community preferences was further embedded in Council processes through the use of a reporting template, which requires all decisions to be linked to community outcomes. The development of the community outcomes further enhanced the Council’s links to other agencies who can contribute to achieving the community outcomes.

184. Going forward, Waimakariri District Council acknowledged work is needed to increase their community’s awareness and understanding of the community outcomes. Given the election of a predominantly new council, consideration is being given to further community consultation to revalidate the desired direction of the new council based on the community outcomes. The latter acknowledges the diversity of opinion within their community and the need for ongoing dialogue about Council direction.

LTCCP

185. Waimakariri District Council officers see themselves as preparing an LTCCP every year, although the legislation only requires a new LTCCP every three years. Internally, the LTCCP development process is perceived as embedding a rigorous planning discipline and sign-off process for Waimakariri District Council. For council staff and councillors, the LTCCP is a key reference point for planning Council activity; one which offers the community greater transparency on Council’s long-term activities. However, they also perceive that re-consulting on decisions already agreed in the LTCCP is, to some extent, eroding the perception of the LTCCP being a long-term strategic plan.

186. Looking to the future and enhancing the utility of the LTCCP, Waimakariri District Council is seeking to encourage more community engagement in its development through initiatives such as pre-LTCCP consultation. Focus is also being placed on making the LTCCP more accessible and meaningful for their community.

Decision-making

187. Waimakariri District Council is aware of and is applying the decision-making provisions under the LGA. Waimakariri District Council sees its use of the decision-making principles in the Act as pre-dating its introduction. The Act has, however, standardised and increased the strategic focus of the Council’s decision-making process, and lessened the risk of rogue decisions.
188. Community engagement in decision-making is perceived to have increased the Council’s transparency and accountability to the community, and there are examples of community input influencing Council’s decision-making and operational procedures. However, the Council perceives some tension arising among its consulting groups given the re-opening of community consultation on issues where agreement had already been reached.

189. Waimakariri District Council commented that the process of consultation as defined in the Act is too prescriptive and inflexible. In particular, the Council want more discretion on when they must undertake a SCP, especially given what they perceive to be a high burden (in terms of cost and time) in this process.

190. As required by the Act, the Rūnanga are involved in decision-making and the Council was acknowledged by them as, at times, both listening and acting upon their consultation. However, the Rūnanga objected to being seen as a stakeholder and not a Treaty partner. Another key issue for Rūnanga was the burden to participate in Council decision-making across the region. Solutions have been suggested such as using their Christchurch-based company.
Appendix One: Community Outcomes

The 16 bolded statements below are the Outcomes the Waimakariri community have indicated as their aspirations for the District and its communities.

The first six statements are the Outcomes that the community told us are priorities. Below each main Outcome are statements which point to aspects of particular concern, as identified through community consultation.

There is a safe environment for all
- Harm to people from natural and manmade hazards is minimised.
- Crime, injury and road accidents are minimised.
- Our District is well served by emergency services and volunteers are encouraged.

Transport is accessible, convenient, reliable, affordable and sustainable
- The standard of our District’s roads is keeping pace with increasing traffic numbers.
- Christchurch is readily accessible by cycle, car, truck, bus or train.
- The District is well served by public transport.

There is sufficient clean water to meet the needs of communities and ecosystems
- The demand for water is kept to a sustainable level.
- Harm to the environment from the spread of contaminants into ground and surface water is minimised.

Businesses in the District are diverse, adaptable, and growing
- There are growing numbers of business and employment opportunities in our District.
- There are sufficient and appropriate places where new businesses are able to set up in our District.
- There are opportunities for our young people to enter employment and gain skills in our District.

Core utility services are provided in a timely, sustainable and affordable manner
- Harm to the environment from sewage and stormwater discharges is minimised.
- Energy and telecommunications services have sufficient capacity.
- Solid waste is minimised and residues do not cause harm to the environment.
- Water supplies to communities are of a high quality.

The community’s needs for health and social services are met
- Our people are supported by a wide range of health services that are available in our District.
- Participation in community-based support services is acknowledged and encouraged

The community has told us that the following Outcomes are also important:

The air is clean
- Reliance on open fires and older style burners for home heating in Kaiapoi and Rangiora is reduced.
- The smells from farming activities are usually only short term and/or seasonal.

The land is healthy

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Soils are protected from inappropriate farming practices. 
The loss of topsoil by wind erosion is minimised.

There are areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats for indigenous fauna
Conservation of significant areas of vegetation and/or habitats is encouraged.

The community’s cultures, arts and heritage are conserved and celebrated
Heritage buildings and sites are protected.
Different cultures are acknowledged and respected.
There are wide ranging opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities.

Public spaces and facilities are plentiful, accessible and high quality
People enjoy clean water at our beaches and rivers.
There is a wide variety of public places and spaces to meet people’s needs.
There are wide ranging opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.
The range of community and recreation facilities meets the changing needs of our community.

The distinctive character of our towns, villages and rural areas is maintained
The centres of our main towns are safe, convenient and attractive places to visit and do business.
Our rural land is mainly used for farming.

People have wide ranging opportunities for learning and being informed
Our schools are well resourced.
Our people are easily able to get the information they need.

People are friendly and caring, creating a strong sense of community in our District
There are wide ranging opportunities for people of different ages to participate in community and recreational activities.
The particular recreational needs of children and young people are met.

Public organisations give effect to the spirit of the Treaty of Waitangi
The Council and Te Ngai Tuahuriri Rūnanga through the Memorandum of Understanding continue to build their relationship.

There are wide ranging opportunities for people to contribute to the decision-making by public organisations that affect our District
Public organisations make information about their plans and activities readily available.
Public organisations make every effort to accommodate the views of people who contribute to consultations.
Appendix Two: Overview of LTCCP Development Plan

2006-2016 LTCCP Development Plan - Schematic

1. Prepare Community Outcomes Statement (COS) & follow up
   - Community consultation workshops and surveys
   - Analyse feedback and prepare draft community outcomes statement (DCS)

2. Plan and Budget for the LTCCP
   - Confirm LTCCP framework with Council
   - Council workshop
   - Report prepared COS to Council progress on engagement with stakeholders
   - Finalise draft LTCCP

3. Policy Review and Development
   - 2006/07 AP & WSS assessments adopted by Council
   - Review LTCCP templates
   - Develop & assemble draft budgets & LTCCP documents
   - Locate and review 1st cut budget
   - Council adopts draft LTCCP
   - Council advertise LTCCP
   - Council receives submissions
   - Council reviews LTCCP
   - Draft LTCCP
   - Further consideration as required

4. Significant Issues and Decisions
   - Assemble information on possible significant issues & decisions for Council review
   - Report to Council on findings
   - Council considers as required
   - Finalise LTCCP
   - Prepare, publish and distribute LTCCP

Timeline:
- April 05
- May
- June
- July
- Aug
- Sep
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec
- Jan 06
- Feb
- Mar
- Apr
- May
- Jun
- July 06