



Community Outcomes Processes

At the Interface e-bulletin July 2008

Welcome to the latest edition of *At the Interface* – bringing you news, issues and events around local and central government collaboration for community outcomes.

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Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty (COBoP) - review and reflection

Barbara MacLennan, Central Region Relationship Manager

The Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty (COBoP) network provides a framework for shared work on projects that promote regional and local well-being and efficient use of resources.

COBoP began in 2005 out of a forum for senior central and local government managers in the Bay. The gathering discussed building a closer relationship between the two sectors to promote and achieve community outcomes in the region.

By late 2005, nine local authorities and 21 central government agencies had signed the Terms of Reference, and COBoP emerged.

Looking back to look forward

COBoP has recently undertaken a review of its work and structure to assist with planning the network's direction through to 2012.

Follow the link at the end of this article to read the full COBoP review.

Jointly resourced by local and central government, the review process included information gathering, interviews, surveys and facilitated discussions with the network signatories.

Bill Bayfield, Chief Executive of Environment Bay of Plenty, said about the review in his keynote speech at the recent DIA Community Outcomes Workshop It Takes Two to Tango

"...[it] was free and frank, another requirement of good collaboration. We have to be able to tell one another when it's not working for us. I sometimes think New Zealanders are too polite, [we need to] build in regular checks to make sure that 'the dancing' is working for us."

Progress in relationships and networks

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The review identified significant achievements by COBoP, particularly in building relationships and networks.

Examples of achievements and progress identified

- gaining a greater mutual understanding of the roles, drivers, mandates, pressures and work of central government agencies and local government
- understanding more fully the huge variations within parts of the region, and the need to tailor responses at local and sub-regional level, rather than just at regional levels
- bringing a sense of order and continuity to what had previously been ad hoc contacts and connections between central and local government personnel.

The review highlighted how COBoP fosters broad networking between central government agencies in the region. COBoP also encourages networking between staff in the region's council such as strategic planners.

Some 'runs on the board'

Stakeholder views about the value of COBoP reflect different perspectives about the drivers for 'success'.

Local government Chief Executives have found it useful to understand the joint process of developing a regional understanding and response to the monitoring and reporting requirements of the Local Government Act 2002. Central government agencies 'wrapped around' this process, assisting with access and interpretation of locally and regionally relevant information where possible.

Other specific successes include

- Collective work among councils on monitoring Community Outcomes. Central government agencies have supported this work. This has resulted in shared intelligence, collective problem solving, peer support, and the development of a common database.

This work led to the development of a Bay of Plenty "perceptions survey" to provide more qualitative data for monitoring progress towards Community Outcomes.

- Fruitful lessons from the work that Bay of Plenty communities are doing to gain designation as [World Health Organisation Safe Communities](#). Tauranga City achieved designation in April and continues to share its knowledge with Rotorua and Taupo Districts.

Achieving Safe Communities status involves the councils, District Health Boards, ACC, New Zealand Police and the Ministry of Social Development working together with other sectors. The COBoP network created the possibility for more communities to focus on designation.

- The scoping and contracting of a regional economic analysis. This project describes the regional and sub-regional economic situation across the Bay of Plenty and identifies potential areas for further work.

The project involved Environment Bay of Plenty, Enterprising Communities of The Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kokiri, NZ Trade and Enterprise, The Departments of Labour and Internal Affairs, and economic development agencies. It has provided useful benchmark information for the new Bay of Plenty Regional Economic Development Board.

- Encouraging Healthy Eating-Healthy Action policies and strategies in central and local

government workplaces in the Bay of Plenty. This pre-empted work which is funded through District Health Boards. Two thirds of COBoP signatory agencies participated, to promote public health initiatives.

Future focus of COBoP

The review process has helped refine the purpose of COBoP and has clarified the focus of future work.

This includes

- more collaborative work between central and local government over the community outcomes processes themselves at local, as well as regional levels.
- more opportunities created for strategic thinking by council chief executives and central government regional managers around complex issues
- developing better ways of connecting local and regional Bay of Plenty experiences with central government policy development
- clarifying relationships between COBoP and other collaborative initiatives in the Bay of Plenty.

Developing the leadership structure

The review identified the need for a more streamlined, responsible and robust governance and leadership structure.

Signatories to the COBoP Terms of Reference initially met three times a year for only one and a half hours. This meant delegating a lot of responsibility to working groups. There was recognition that central government regional managers and council Chief Executives needed further opportunities to discuss complex issues.

COBoP signatories have agreed that the next phase will be led by a much smaller group. The new Co-Governance group met for the first time in April.

The review found that in the future participants need to be open to the network continually evolving, and finding new ways of working together to make progress on agreed priorities.

International experience suggests that “problem-solving networks will not become new, permanent organisations, but shifting sets of projects that are able to reconfigure themselves rapidly to meet changing local and national needs¹”.

COBoP moving forward

Local and central government personnel involved in the review reflected on the challenges of resourcing ‘joined up’ thinking and work. They noted that through determined commitment and a spirit of goodwill, COBoP has gathered resources to date by ‘patching’ together small amounts from different sources.

The intent of the Local Government Act 2002 and the spirit of many central government strategies clearly indicate a requirement for collaboration. However, the COBoP experience to date has demonstrated that the collaborative focus needs to extend further into the policy and operational environments.

Bay of Plenty Managers from both central and local government have made a commitment to continue along the collaborative path at both regional and local levels.

The review process has provided an opportunity to share perspectives on success and progress,

and on ways to overcome barriers to working together more effectively in the interests of people and communities in the Bay of Plenty.

More information

[Review of Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty \(COBoP\) March 2008](#)

[Putting Pen to Paper Profiles COBoP Case Study](#)

<http://www.envbop.govt.nz/CommunityOutcomes/COBoP.asp>

<http://www.safecommunities.org.nz/>

1. <http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/collaborativestatecollection> – 2007, p 20

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Guidelines for developing policy that could involve local government

The Department of Internal Affairs has prepared guidelines for central government officials to use when developing policy that could involve local government. These guidelines are available at www.localcentral.govt.nz, in PDF format, question and answer format and section by section.

[Click here](#) to view the guidelines.

A quick reference guide is now being prepared on how to use the guidelines, when to consult with local government and who to talk to.

Collaboration between central and local government is key to delivering national and local outcomes. Local authorities have responsibilities under dozens of Acts and Regulations. Central Government involving local government early helps to establish how the sector should be consulted over the development of regulatory functions, and whether a different approach is more appropriate.

Critical points for those preparing policy and regulations that could affect councils include

- considering the differences between councils capacity to implement policies (for example Christchurch City Council and Waimate District Council)
- the diversity of circumstances that councils deal with (diverse populations, geography, topography and climate)
- considering existing policies and regulatory activities, local government planning timeframes, and the resources and training required to implement policies
- considering how costs should be internalised if, when there are national benefits from a proposal which incurs local costs.

With the help of the local government sector DIA is also preparing scenarios that show how to use the guidelines.

We will advise you when these additional aids are completed and are available on www.localcentral.govt.nz.

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Outcomes - getting from talk to action - Mark Friedman Seminar

Rosalind Barry, Lower North Relationship Manager

In late June the Ministry of Social Development sponsored a seminar on a common sense approach to getting results – the *Outcomes Accountability Framework*.

The seminar was led by Mark Friedman, a public policy expert from the United States. Mark developed the *Outcomes Accountability Framework* as a common sense approach to fostering connected communities which gets you from talk to action. The Framework uses plain language and produces minimum paper - and it is useful! It helps us think clearly about the outcomes we wish to achieve and the strategies we use to get there.

Outcomes Accountability Framework

- We have a disciplined thinking process where we start with the ends (outcomes) and work backwards, step by step. Outcomes are the things we want as the bottom line, for example, safe communities.
- We establish indicator baselines showing where we have been and where we are headed if we stay on our current course. The indicator is a measure which helps quantify the achievement of the outcome. For example, the number of crimes committed is one indicator of how safe the community is.
- Then, we consider the story behind the baselines, the causes. For example, why are communities not safer?
- Next, we consider all the potential partners who can contribute to improving results. For example, who can contribute to making the community safe?
- Then we consider what works better than what we are currently doing (the baseline). This includes what the research tells us and what our common sense tells us.
- Finally, we work out action strategies that can improve the baseline. Think broadly and look at including low and no-cost actions.

Mark says that with this thinking process we can use outcomes to

- drive budgets
- develop cross agency plans to improve well-being
- tap into the contributions of public and private sector partners
- find no-cost or low-cost actions.

The *Outcomes Accountability Framework* can be used to inform budget choices over several years. And when one action plan works to improve conditions of well-being, it can set the pattern to tackle another. Over time we can build up the capacity to view progress across agencies on many different outcomes.

Applying the Theory

Workshopping real examples showed us that the *Outcomes Accountability Framework* was helpful. It gives us a practical framework to work through and helps us develop outcomes and indicators in plain language. The process ensures we use only a few key indicators, create at least one no-cost or low-cost idea, and learn how to measure if the actions made a difference. It also encourages “off the wall” suggestions to free up people’s thinking. And all this fitted on one page!

Making a Difference

Making a difference, or as Friedman would say, “turning the curve”, is not just about a single organisation, but about partners working together to achieve better outcomes.

This *Outcomes Accountability Framework* (or *Results Accountability Framework* as it is also

known) is being used in New Zealand and internationally. Have a look at the website www.resultsaccountability.com and if you get a chance to hear Mark Friedman speak, take the opportunity.

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Telling Our Stories - preparing an LTCCP summary for community engagement

The New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers has developed *Telling Our Stories*, a guide for local authorities. *Telling Our Stories* provides practical tips on how to prepare an LTCCP summary that engages the community throughout the LTCCP process and meets the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002.

[Click here](#) to download *Telling our Stories* from the SOLGM website. There is also information on the three finalists of the 2006 SOLGM LTCCP Summary Competition - Tauranga City Council, Papakura District Council and Auckland Regional Council.

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Seminar: A new model of public engagement - giving citizens, communities and stakeholders a real role

29 July 2008 - AUT University Conference Centre, Auckland

30 July 2008 - James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, Wellington

The Public Policy Forum (PPF) is a leading Canadian research organisation located in Ottawa. In association with the Local Government Centre at AUT University the PPF is bringing its successful seminar on public engagement to New Zealand. This is a unique opportunity for the members of New Zealand's public policy community to learn about a new model of public engagement developed and tested in Canada yet fully applicable to the needs of New Zealand's public service.

The Seminar will be facilitated by Don Lenihan, former Public Engagement Advisor to the Provincial Government of New Brunswick (Canada).

[Click here](#) for more information and registration details.

[Click here](#) for a biography of Don Lenihan.

[Click here](#) for a background note on 'A new model of public engagement'.

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2008 Community Plan Conference and LTCCP 101: An Introduction to the LTCCP

These two events are both designed primarily for local authority staff but could also be of interest to staff of central government agencies whose roles involve either working with local authorities or offering policy advice to Ministers about local government.

The two events are being held consecutively (LTCCP101 on the Sunday afternoon followed by the Conference on Monday and Tuesday) to provide the opportunity for people to attend both

events in one trip and one block of time out from the office.

2008 Community Plan Conference

11 - 12 August 2008 Holiday Inn City Centre Christchurch, Christchurch

The Community Planning Conference is the annual gathering of local authority staff involved in local strategic planning, including the development of community outcomes and LTCCPs.

This year's conference has more 'case study' approaches than previous conferences. People will share practical ideas to improve the strategic nature of plans, and the degree to which communities buy into them. There will be far less 'theory' and the words "in 2006" are banned for the two days!

The programme for 2008 has been designed with the following three broad themes in mind

- sustainability
- engaging and building relationships within the community
- climate change

and how each of these is relevant to the 2009-19 plans and those beyond.

[Click here](#) for programme and registration information for the 2008 Community Plan Conference, from the Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM) website.

LTCCP 101: An Introduction to the LTCCP

10 August 2008 Holiday Inn City Centre Christchurch, Christchurch

"LTCCP101" is the first outing for a new course we have developed to provide an introduction to the local government planning framework, compressed into a half day. The primary target audience is new staff to the local government sector, but it will be equally relevant to staff from central government agencies and other groups whose roles require some them to deal with local government and to understand the planning framework under which local authorities operate.

[Click here](#) for the programme and registration information for LTCCP 101: An Introduction to the LTCCP, from the Society of Local Government Managers (SOLGM) website.

If you have any questions, or need further information, about either of these events please contact

Carolyn Lampp, Event Coordinator on **04 978 1243**, or email clampp@solgm.org.nz

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Blueprints for Sustainable Infrastructure Conference

Developing Sustainable Communities, Delivering Sustainable Infrastructure, and Designing Global Solutions

9-12 December 2008, University of Auckland, Auckland

[Click here](#) to download the programme and registration details.

This Conference will present some of the most recent achievements in sustainable infrastructure development.

Infrastructure provides the basic needs for society and sustainable infrastructure systems are essential for the survival, health and well-being of a society. These are complex, interdependent and dynamic systems in need of greater understanding and recognition. Key to this understanding is recognising the dependence on environmental systems and services, the interdependence on other infrastructure systems and on social, technical and economic systems.

The Blueprints for Sustainable Infrastructure Conference includes

- nine keynote speakers, including international experts
- presentation of nearly 100 parallel papers
- two panel discussions and workshops presented at the conference on:
 - Infrastructure management
 - Modelling for a sustainable community
 - Future thinking and frontier design
 - Global responses to climate change
 - Managing your carbon.
- Case Studies sessions
 - The Kelvin Grove Sustainable Village Project in Brisbane
 - New Zealand as a Test Bed: Leading the World Beyond Sustainable Built Environments

Contact vicky@nzsses.org.nz for further information

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Contact us

At the Interface is the newsletter of The Department of Internal Affairs Interface Facilitation Team.

If you have any feedback, questions or items that you would like to include in *At the Interface*, please contact tom.cato@dia.govt.nz.

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