

5. PROCESS FOR PREPARING LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN



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The purpose of this report is to obtain Committee approval for the first steps necessary for preparing the Council's first Long Term Council Community Plan, and for participation by elected members in the process.

BACKGROUND

The Local Government Bill, as introduced into Parliament, proposes that councils prepare a Long Term Council Community Plan once every three years. (In the two intervening years, councils will be required to prepare a simplified version of our current annual plan.) The Bill proposes what is in effect a 5-phase process for preparing a Long Term Council Community Plan:

1. Prepare a set of community outcomes and priorities. This phase must include collaborating with "other bodies capable of influencing either the identification or promotion of community outcomes and priorities".(S73)
2. Provide the public with an opportunity to make submissions on the community outcomes and priorities.
3. Decide on the role(s) the Council will have in furthering the community outcomes and priorities. The set of community outcomes and priorities, and the roles the Council proposes to choose for itself, will subsequently be included in the Long Term Council Community Plan.
4. Prepare the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) itself, based on the roles chosen in Phase 3. This phase will not be dissimilar to the way the Annual Plan is currently prepared, including processes for public submissions, although the LTCCP will have to disclose considerably more information than the present Annual Plan.
5. Publish the LTCCP using the special consultative procedure.

Although the Local Government Bill has yet to be passed, it seems reasonable to assume the principles in the Bill as introduced into Parliament will survive more-or-less intact. That is, no matter what the final details are, there will be new processes for engaging the community, and there will be more sophisticated planning and reporting requirements. While there will inevitably be changes as the Bill progresses into law, and these will be reported to the Council, work done following the processes as they are currently set out will result in useful input from the community.

Value is therefore seen in starting work now so that the new requirements, once they are finally known, will be met on time.

Until Parliament confirms otherwise, it is assumed the first Long Term Council Community Plan will have to be prepared for the financial year beginning 1 July 2004.

STREAMS OF WORK

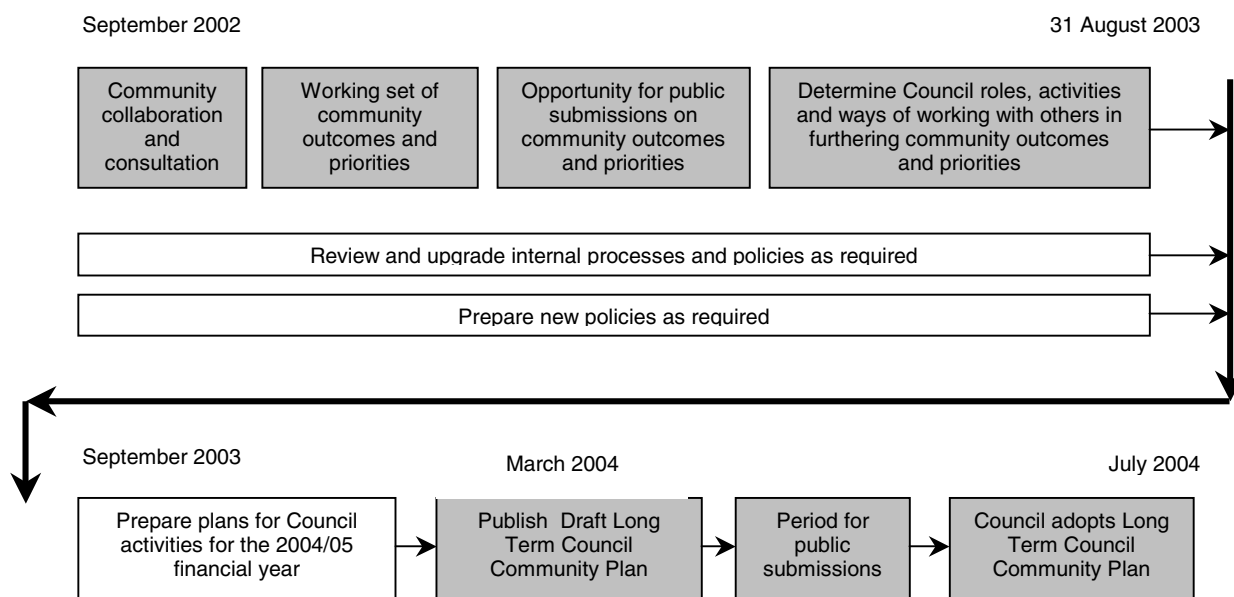
There will be two broad streams of work, one largely externally focused, and the other largely internal.

The external stream will be the work required to achieve phases 1-3 above, that is to work with other agencies to arrive at a set of community outcomes and priorities, to identify the roles the Council wishes to pursue itself, and "how the Council will work with other local and regional organisations, Maori, central government, non-governmental organisations and the private sector to further the outcomes identified". (Sch8,S1) This report proposes elected members become significantly involved in this process, as discussed below.

The internal stream will be the work required to bring our internal processes and procedures up to the standards proposed in the Bill. Fortunately, the current systems and processes already reflect, or are already being upgraded to reflect, the good practices contained in the Bill, so the work in this stream may not be too onerous. Staff have already begun work on this stream.

TIMELINE

The following timeline is based on the present wording of the Bill:



(The shaded boxes refer to the external stream of work identified previously. The unshaded boxes represent the internal work required to bring policies and processes up to standard, and complete the necessary plans and budgets. Elected members will be involved in the development of policies and plans.)

COLLABORATION

The Bill as currently worded requires the Council to:

- "identify, so far as practicable, the other bodies capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes and priorities...", and;
- "secure, if practicable, the agreement of those bodies to the process and to the relationship of the process to any existing and related plans..."

Elsewhere the Bill states the LTCCP must then show how the local authority will work with:

- Other local organisations and regional organisations
- Maori
- Central government and non-governmental organisations
- the private sector

The identity of the collaborees, and the exact nature of the collaboration process, is for the Council to determine. There are a number of factors which need to be considered:

- There a number of local and regional organisations which will be of interest to several local authorities. Obvious examples are Government departments and certain Maori organisations whose activities and interests span more than one authority. It would be advantageous to have arrangements in place for joint collaboration with the agencies and several authorities in order to avoid "collaboration fatigue".
- The Council already has arrangements in place for consulting with Maori.
- The Council already has networks with outside organisations covering many areas of interest.
- Collaboration arrangements will need to be flexible and inclusive.
- Collaborative arrangements are already in place with some agencies. Examples include Healthy Christchurch, the memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Social Development, and the Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy work being done under the auspices of the Canterbury Forum.

- It is important to get started. Details will evolve as collaboration progresses; indeed the collaborees themselves are likely to expect some say in how the processes will unfold.
- Elected member oversight and participation will be required.
- Community Boards are essential and important participants in Council planning processes.

Among the networks of which the Council is part is the Canterbury Forum, which comprises the Mayors, Chairs and Chief Executives of Canterbury councils. Initial discussions by the forum suggest there will be real benefits in cooperative working on LTCCPs, including avoiding duplication in collaborating with groups and agencies. The Canterbury Forum is considered to be well-placed for this role, as it contains representatives of both governance and management.

- Recommendation:**
1.
 - (a) That an unpaid working party of elected members be appointed to oversee the process of collaboration leading to a statement of community objectives and priorities.
 - (b) That the membership of the working party be the Mayor (convener) and the Chairs of the Strategy and Finance Committee, Community and Leisure Committee and the Community Plans Special Committee.
 - (c) That the working party report to the Strategy and Finance Committee.
 2. That the Canterbury Forum be invited to co-ordinate collaboration among the region's local authorities and agencies where it is advantageous to collaborate regionally.
 3. That the Maori Liaison Subcommittee be authorised to initiate and oversee the process of collaboration with Maori, noting that for some topics and on some occasions it may be appropriate to work with other regional interests.
 4. That Community Boards be invited to consider ways of collaborating with their respective communities prior to their making their views on community outcomes and priorities known to the Council.