

1. LONG-TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANS AND COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

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The purpose of this report is to submit the recommendation of the Long-Term Council Community Plan Working Party on the preparation of the Council's first Long-Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP).

At its meeting on 18 December the working party requested staff to report to the Community Plans Special Committee and the Strategy and Finance Committee on the provisions of the new Local Government Act and the process to be followed for preparing the first LTCCP for the year beginning 1 July 2004.

The key requirements of the new legislation are set out below:

1. The Act retains the fundamental planning framework proposed in the Bill, that is:
 - The purpose of local government includes promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future;
 - Planning is to be based on the concept of outcomes for the community, and the specific contributions the Council will make to furthering those outcomes;
 - There is to be collaboration with other organisations and groups capable of influencing or identifying community outcomes.
 - A long term council community plan (LTCCP) will be prepared every three years, with much simplified annual plans being prepared for the intervening years. LTCCPs will be prepared to come into effect for the mid year of the electoral cycle.
2. Long-term council community plans are subject to audit. The auditor is to report on the extent of compliance with the Act with respect to the plan, the quality of the information and assumptions underlying the forecasts in the plan, and the extent to which the information provided in the plan allows for the meaningful assessment of the actual levels of service provision. The auditor is excluded from commenting on the merits of any policy content of the plan.
3. The audit requirement applies to both draft and adopted LTCCPs.
4. Plans – both LTCCP and Annual – will have to be prepared and adopted before the financial year to which they apply begins, that is before 1 July. At present, the annual plan can be adopted up to 3 months after the financial year has begun.
5. Section 280 of the Act requires all local authorities to prepare an LTCCP for the year beginning 1 July 2006. This plan must be prepared using the full process prescribed in the Act. In summary, this involves identifying organisations capable of identifying or promoting community outcomes, seeking their agreement to the process for identifying community outcomes, encouraging the public to participate in identifying and prioritising community outcomes, preparing plans for the Council's programme of work looking 10 years ahead, then adopting the LTCCP using the special consultative procedure. Both the draft and adopted versions of the LTCCP will be subject to audit as discussed above.
6. Councils have the option of preparing an LTCCP for either of the years beginning 1 July 2003 or 1 July 2004 (section 279). Councils may avail themselves of an abbreviated process for preparing their first LTCCP. They will not have to go through the full process of engagement to identify and prioritise community outcomes – they can prepare their statement of community outcomes from information they already hold. Nor will the LTCCPs be subject to audit, for either draft or adopted version. Although the term is not used in the Act, it may be helpful to think of this as a "transitional LTCCP".
7. Section 281 requires councils who choose not to prepare an LTCCP for 2003 to prepare an Annual Plan under the provisions of the 1974 Act (as if those provisions had not been repealed), with some modifications, namely:

- Funding, financial, investment and liability management policies and statements must be prepared under the provisions of the 2002 Act.
- The special consultative procedure in the 2002 Act must be followed
- The consultation and decision-making standards in the 2002 Act apply
- An updated summary of the Council's long-term financial strategy must be included
- The following statements, not required by the 1974 Act, must be included:
 - The council's policy on partnerships with the private sector
 - The council's policy on determining significance.

The timing of the 1974 Act still applies. That is, the annual plan does not have to be adopted until up to three months after the financial year begins.

8. The provisions of the Act are generally as had been anticipated when the Council resolved in September 2002 to prepare its first LTCCP for the 2004-2005 year. The earlier decision had anticipated that this initial LTCCP would need to be based on a shortened process and would be followed by a "full" LTCCP. In many ways the "transitional" LTCCP can be thought of as a key milestone in a process of working with other agencies and the community towards the plan which will crystallise for the 2006-2007 year.
9. Starting with the first full LTCCP the Council must, not less than once every six years (that is at least every second LTCCP) carry out a process to identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long term future of the city (Section 91(i)). The process for undertaking this identification of community outcomes is for the Council to determine. However before finally deciding on the process it must identify other organisations or groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes and if practicable secure the agreement of those organisations and groups to the proposed process and to the relationship of that process in any existing and related plans. The Council must also ensure that the process it designs encourages the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes. Since the community outcomes are designed to influence the setting of Council (and other organisations) priorities they need to be identified in time to influence the shape of the LTCCP for the three years beginning 1 July 2006, that is in the 2005 calendar year. The Council is also required to, at not less than three yearly intervals, report on the progress made by the community in achieving the community outcomes for the city. This means that the community outcomes must be measurable and that there needs to be baseline information on the outcomes before the LTCCP comes into effect.
10. Since all local authorities will be working on identifying community outcomes on the same timeline to meet the requirement to produce an LTCCP for the period starting 1 July 2006 this reinforces the sense of the city co-operating with neighbouring local authorities and the Regional Council in a collaborative approach to the identification of community outcomes and the work that was initiated by the Canterbury Forum last year designed to achieve this is continuing.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council prepare an annual plan for the year beginning 1 July 2003 pursuant to the provisions of section 281 of the Local Government Act 2002.
 2. That the Council reconfirm its earlier decision to prepare its first Long Term Council Community Plan for the year beginning 1 July 2004 pursuant to the provisions of section 279 of the Local Government Act 2002.
 3. That the Director of Information and Planning report to the Council in April 2003 on the process for Long Term Council Community Plan preparation for 2004 with particular reference to the process for identifying community outcomes.