



Public Health
ASSOCIATION OF NZ INC
KĀHUI HAUORA TŪMATANUI

Supporting a Public Health Perspective in Local and Regional Government

A template and advice on making submissions to council plans

Why?

Local and regional government can control a large number of factors that determine the health of people in their areas.

How?

Councils are required under the [Local Government Act 2001](#) to consult with their communities at several different points in the planning cycle. Interested individuals and organizations (such as public health providers or PHA branches can make submissions (of course, having an elected member of the Council with strong public health focus helps) The PHA has developed a [submission template](#) and the office may be able to assist its local branches in making submissions depending on other workload. Call us and see how we can help - 04 472 3060.

When?

Councils operate on a yearly planning cycle within a three-year cycle. The points that are open for public consultation are the [Long-Term Council Community Plan](#), [Community Outcomes](#) (see also [here](#)), and [Annual Plan](#).

This resource pack contains:

1. [A checklist of specific public health issues to look for in a draft plans](#) (see pages 2-3)
2. [Information on Council planning process](#) (see pages 4-6)
3. [Information on LTCCPs for your council](#) (where we have been able to find it)
4. [A template for a submission with reference to the links between the public health issues and health outcomes](#)
5. [A list of possible performance measures to monitor progress to achieve public health community outcomes](#) (see pages 8-10).

1. A Checklist of Processes and Public Health Issues to Look for in Draft Council Plans

Particular processes to look for:

- Community consultation and involvement of Maori and Pacific people;
- The statement of desired community outcomes and how this has been developed; in particular look for a statement on public health outcomes, often this will be framed as “community wellbeing”
- How the local authority will work with Maori to further community outcomes;
- What measures will be used to assess progress towards the achievement of community outcomes; and
- How the local authority will **monitor** and, not less than once in every three years, **report** on the community’s progress towards achieving community outcomes.

Particular issues to look for:

Healthy environments including clean and healthy air, food, and water:

- Water supply
- Drinking Water
- Emergency Management
- Wastewater and Stormwater
- Food Quality
- Inspection Programmes
- Fluoridation

Adequate affordable housing:

Poor housing and accommodation contribute to poor health that is often reflected in Asthma and Respiratory Disease incidence for children and the elderly. Cost of housing is also known to impact on low socioeconomic families’ ability to pay for food, heating and health services. With an ageing population there may also be a need to provide more housing than is currently available.

Given the importance of adequate housing the Council should follow progress by reporting on levels of household crowding and housing affordability¹, and avoidable hospital admissions for

¹ The Social Report 2003. The Ministry of Social Development, p. 70-74.

people in the District for conditions associated with poor housing and overcrowding, such as cellulitis and subcutaneous abscesses, meningitis, and bronchiectasis²

Environments that support healthy life choices, (such as city design that supports physical activity, inspection, and enforcement services that work):

Many of the planning, inspection, and enforcement services have a significant impact on health. These are often areas in which active cooperation with cooperation with other sectors can have really positive impact on community health and wellbeing.

For example, one of the significant health issues for many communities is alcohol-related harm – road crashes, violence, disorderly young people, and unplanned, unsafe sexual activity. District councils have a role in planning consents, inspection, and enforcement services for the sale of alcohol. Collaboration of the local authorities with Police and regional public health staff can result in very positive movement towards the desired outcome of safe and health communities.

Alcohol-related harm information that local authorities could monitor and report to the community are such items as alcohol-related crime, drink-drive data³, hospital admissions for alcohol poisoning, and number of people seeking treatment for alcohol-related problems⁴.

Safe transport systems that support social integration:

- Options for public transport to ensure that those without cars can participate.
- Road safety issues
- Cycle and walkways to support physical activity

Social and cultural wellbeing:

- What is the Council doing, especially in relation to children and young people, and other vulnerable?
- A long-term council community plan must set out any steps that the local authority intends to take, having considered ways in which it might foster the development of Maori capacity to contribute to the decision-making processes of the local authority, over the period covered by that plan.
- New Zealand Disabilities Strategy – Participation of all New Zealanders.

² Data on avoidable admissions within each district is analysed by the Ministry of Health and is available from the DHB.

³ Available from the Police

⁴ Available from the District Health Board

2. Information on Council Planning Processes

Promotion of Public Health Perspectives in Long-Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs)

About Long-Term Council Community Plans:

Under Section 93 (LGA02), local authorities are required to produce, once every three years, a Long-Term Community Council Plan (LTCCP) covering at least the next 10 years. Each LTCCP sets out 3 years in detail and the remaining 7 years in overview.

The purpose of the LTCCP is to:

Describe the activities of the local authority;

Describe the community outcomes of the local authority's district or region;

Provide integrated decision-making and co-ordination of local authority resources;

Provide a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority;

Provide a basis for accountability of the local authority to the community; and

Provide an opportunity for participation by the public in decision-making processes on activities undertaken by the local authority.

LTCCP developed in 2003 and 2004 are transitional and subsequent plans will have 3-years of detailed community planning information based on identified outcomes. LTCCPs must be reviewed and evaluated once every three years or, in the case of the first LTCCP adopted for the period beginning 1 July 2004, within two years. This means that during 2005/06, all local authorities will develop their LTCCPs for 2006. These will include information about the priorities that communities have identified for themselves, through the community outcomes process, and what actions the council will take which will impact on those priorities. These comprehensive LTCCPs need to be complete by the **1st of July 2006**.

About the Local Government Act 2002:

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA02) expanded the mandate of local authorities from a prescriptive framework of duties (such as roads, rates, and rubbish) to a principles approach where councils have broad scope to act as they judge appropriate. This is framed within their purpose of seeking to promote the current and future economic, social, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of their community and enabling greater community influence on decision-making.

The LGA02 introduced a requirement for local authorities to identify community outcomes using a process discussed with other stakeholders, and to engage the public to discuss and prioritise those outcomes. There is also specific emphasis on local authorities gaining and supporting

Maori involvement in decision-making processes, and encouragement for more work in partnership with other local authorities, government agencies and community organisations.

Local authorities have a role in facilitating joint local and regional activity by communities, other local authorities, government agencies, local organisations, and the business sector to achieve progress towards the outcomes and priorities identified by the community and more effective and efficient use of resources. They are required to report on the progress towards achieving outcomes at least every three years.

About Community Outcomes:

Community outcomes are a reflection of what is important to a local community within a city, district, or region.

The purposes of community outcomes and the processes for identifying them are addressed in Section 91 of the LGA02:

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

(2) The purposes of the identification of community outcomes are:

(a) to provide opportunities for communities to discuss their desired outcomes in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community; and

(b) to allow communities to discuss the relative importance and priorities of identified outcomes to the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community; and

(c) to provide scope to measure progress towards the achievement of community outcomes; and

(e) to promote the better co-ordination and application of community resources; and

(f) to inform and guide the setting of priorities in relation to the activities of the local authority and other organisations.

A local authority may decide for itself the process that it is to use to facilitate the identification of community outcomes under subsection (1), but the local authority:

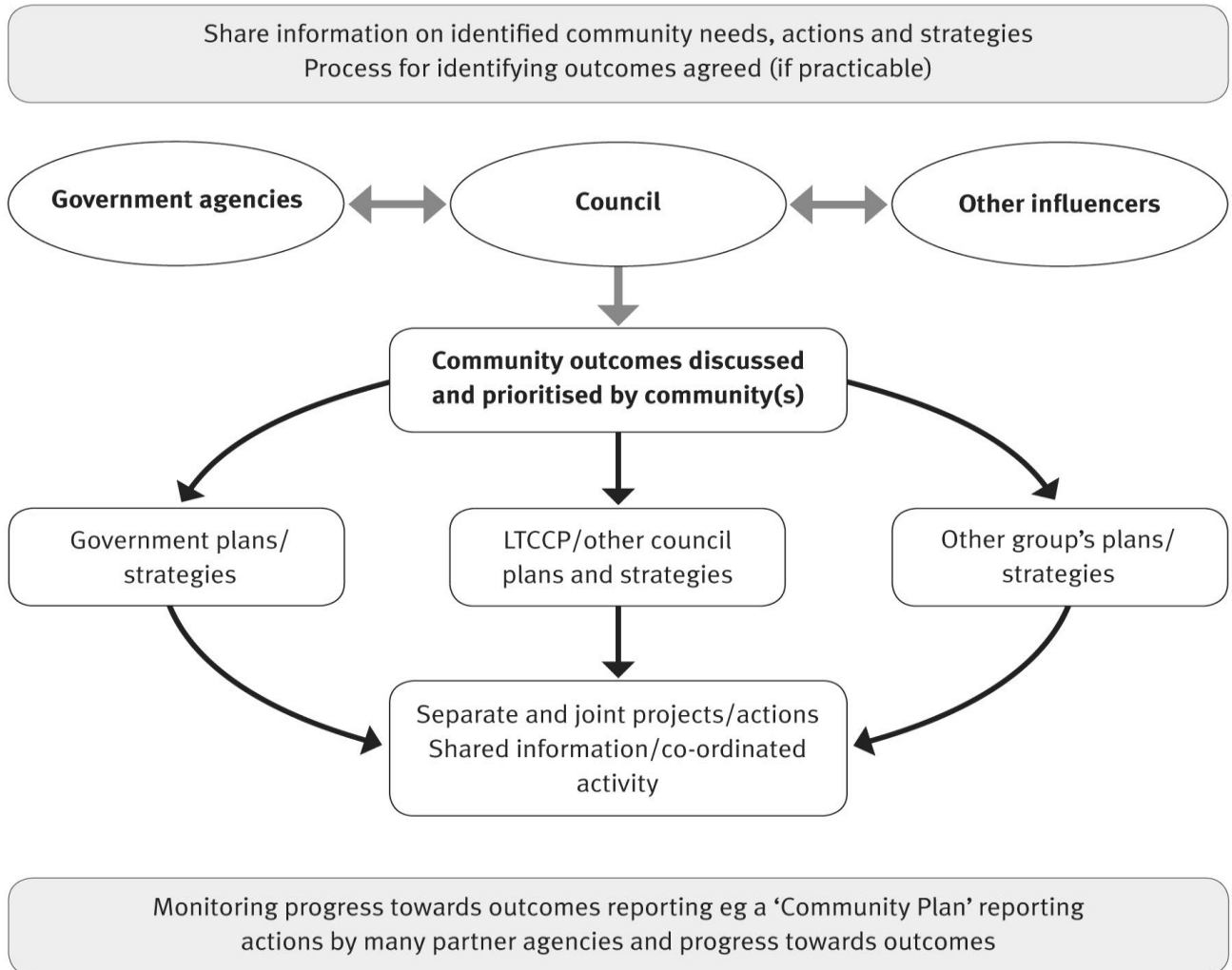
(a) Must, before finally deciding on that process, take steps

(i) to identify, so far as practicable, other organisations and groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes; and

(ii) to secure, if practicable, the agreement of those organisations and groups to the process and to the relationship of the process to any existing and related plans; and must ensure that the process encourages the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes.

Community outcomes provide a means for people and organisations in the region/district/city to help identify and prioritise needs for that area. They can provide a structure for activities at a local level, and joint initiatives or resource use. The following diagram indicates how different parties can fit into the process.

Involvement in developing and using community outcomes



The Place of Public Health:

In light of the upcoming LTCCP review and consultation processes, local branches of the Public Health Association can play an active role in promoting public health in their respective local authorities' plans.

We will provide as much background information as possible about particular processes and issues relating to Public Health that should be promoted in LTTCPs.

The plans of each local authority will be distinct and therefore submissions each will have to be developed in accordance with the needs of respective communities and in line with the draft plans by the local authority.

5. Possible performance measures for LTCCPs

Health Determinants	Council Outputs that Could be Reported	Health Outcomes that Could be Reported
<u>Housing</u>		
Household Crowding ⁵ Housing Affordability ⁶		Avoidable hospital admissions for people in the District for conditions associated with poor housing and overcrowding, such as cellulitis and subcutaneous abscesses, meningitis, and bronchiectasis. ⁷
<u>Alcohol Misuse</u>		
	Policy on work with other agencies. Levels of compliance with license.	Alcohol-related crime, drink-drive data ⁸ , hospital admissions for alcohol poisoning, and numbers of people seeking treatment for alcohol-related problems ⁹ .
<u>Food Borne Disease</u>		
	High risk premises inspected frequently, all premises investigated to plan.	Incidence of food borne disease related to commercial premises.
	Percentage of premises requiring urgent intervention to meet statutory requirement to produce safe food.	
	Information provided to food premises informing them of responsibilities and informing them of training available.	

⁵ The Social Report 2003. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington, p70-74

⁶ The Social Report 2003. Ministry of Social Development, Wellington, p70-74

⁷ Data on avoidable admissions within each District Health Board is analysed by the Ministry of Health and is available from the DHB.

⁸ Available from the Police

⁹ Available from the District Health Board

Health Determinants	Council Outputs that Could be Reported	Health Outcomes that Could be Reported
<u>Water Supply</u>		
	Percentage of dwellings without reticulated water.	
	Education on treatment and maintenance is provided to ensure that those dwellings without reticulated water supplies have potable water.	
	Number of “no water” events – interruption to water supplies	Drinking water quality
<u>Waste Water</u>		
	Maintenance of sewerage.	All communicable diseases
	Percentage of dwellings without reticulated sewerage.	
	Surface water quality. Water quality of swimming beaches. River water quality.	
<u>Oral Health</u>		
	Water fluoridation	DMF teeth at age 5 and 12.
<u>Environmental Health</u>		
	Number of complaints received and investigated.	
	Number of Hazardous substances events /sites.	
	Air quality.	
	Soil quality.	

<u>Physical Activity and Recreation</u>		
	Hectares of parks and reserves per capita. Number of clubs by activity type. Participation in sport (SPARC).	
	Testing of water quality at beaches and swimming pools.	
<u>Physical Activity and Transport</u>		
	Percentage of urban dwellings within 700m of a bus/train stop	
	Satisfaction with public transport.	
	Traffic congestion-traffic density on the networks (transfund).	
	Proportion of sealed roads with cycle way.	
<u>Safety of Council Operations</u>		
		Safety record of activity, by type of activity (e.g. forestry).