



Waitakere WELLBEING COLLABORATION PROJECT

Council • Community • Government – Working together

LOOKING BACK AND MOVING ON UP

A BACKGROUND PAPER RE THE WAITAKERE WELLBEING COLLABORATION PROJECT PREPARED FOR THE WELLBEING SUMMIT OCTOBER 2005 FROM DI JENNINGS WELLBEING COLLABORATION PROJECT MANAGER

INTRODUCTION

This paper considers:

- The key achievements of the Collaboration Project since its inception in 2002
- the next steps for the project in terms of ongoing development of the broader Wellbeing strategy for the City and the changing central, regional and local government environment

BACKGROUND

The Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project is a three year initiative that facilitates Waitakere City Council, Central Government and Community agencies to plan and work together on social wellbeing issues in Waitakere City. The overall direction was mandated at the 2002 Wellbeing Summit and is built on many years of developing a culture of working together that has become known over time as "The Waitakere Way".

Prior to 2002, a number of collaborative forums were already well established in Waitakere. eg WADCOSS, Te Whanau o Waipareira Health forum, Shared Vision. The Waitakere Government Intersector Group was established in 1999 followed by the Community Wellbeing Network in 2000. These forums were pivotal for the establishment of the Collaboration Strategy Group (the governing body of the project) that is made up of representatives of the latter two forums plus Council officers.

The Project is both collaboratively governed and resourced. It is mandated through annual Wellbeing Summits and regular meetings of the Wellbeing Collaboration Strategy Group.

The project has three strands:

- Supporting collaborative projects identified by 'Call to Action' groups
- Facilitating a more collaborative planning environment
- Increasing the sharing of information.

The 'Call to Action' steering groups are made up of stakeholders from the council, community organisations and government agencies. These groups are charged with identifying aims and objectives, launching and overseeing projects. The project teams are required to source their own staffing and funding.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

In 2002 the following strategic outcomes and focus areas were identified:

Strategic Outcomes

- Healthy, Safe & Well Housed
- Culturally Diverse & Socially integrated
- Educationally Rich, Highly Skilled & Creative
- Economically Productive & Innovative

Focus Areas

- Great Start (0 to 8years)
- Safe families
- Life Changes/Quality transitions

Calls to Action

At the 2002 Wellbeing Summit, seven goal areas ("Calls to Action") were identified and adopted, and working groups representing the Council, community organisations and government agencies were convened to identify and initiate projects. The focus was on supporting areas where three-way partnership would bear fruit. In a short time most groups were able to clarify the issues, identify projects and take action. The original Calls to Action were:

1. Every child has access to quality early child education.
2. Every student in Waitakere leaves school with a Plan
3. Developing a culture of inclusion in Waitakere
4. Families give their children a great start
5. Migrants and refugees settle successfully in Waitakere
6. Reduction of violence to women and children in Waitakere
7. Schools and Community working together

Criteria for Calls to Action were:

- Answers a need or problem that has been identified as a **priority**.
- Achievable within **3 years**
- Will make a **measurable improvement** to Wellbeing
- Will **motivate** and strike a chord with the community
- Simple and **easily understood** by all parties
- **Don't reinvent** the wheel – focus on areas where there are already current initiatives underway and value can be added through collaboration
- **Start simple** so that we can learn and practice collaboration process
- **Multi-agency** involvement – requires collaboration to achieve

At the Wellbeing Summits held in July and August 2004, the above 'Calls to Action' were re-endorsed and a further two were flagged for development. They were:

1. Everyone in Waitakere has access to affordable appropriate housing
2. Information technology is used by organisations to support the outcomes of wellbeing and collaboration

Two areas did not progress as well as others: "Schools and Communities working together" and "Parents give their children a great start". This was mainly related to:

- a) The overwhelming challenge of wrestling with the topic and getting to a project or projects, and
- b) Having the right people around the table at the right time - particularly from central government in the early stages

Subsequently, the Great Start Call to Action was effectively replaced by a new collaborative effort targeted at under 5's entitled "Te Korowai Manaaki" that was brought under the umbrella of the Collaboration Project. It has eight areas of action and was based on extensive consideration of local, national and international ideas, initiatives and policies.

The Schools and Communities working together "Call to Action" is currently being re-branded as "Educators and Communities working together" to include early childhood and the tertiary sector as well as schools. A very well attended one day conference was held in early October 2005 that is providing new direction for this Call to Action

Every Child Leaves School with a Plan "Call to Action" is now implemented through the Waitakere Employment and Skills Project and has broadened its scope to include a skills demand focus since the initial working group was established.

The most active "Calls to Action" have managed to attract resourcing to employ staff to coordinate and broker collaborative effort. To date, minimal new funding has been provided specifically to resource collaborative initiatives and most "Call to Action" projects have secured resources through established funding programmes; the exception was the collaborative funding secured by WAVES for three projects under the Reduction of Violence "Call to Action"

Governance

The Collaboration Strategy Group is the governance forum for the project. There have been a number of changes to key personnel attending this forum and this has resulted in heavier reliance on the project staff.

Participation by Pacific Island and Maori representatives has been low and the mandating process by the Community Wellbeing Network and Government Intersector Group is not as strong as in the beginning. In spite of these weaknesses and their potential risk, the overall Collaboration Project and the "Call to Action" groups have progressed with momentum and have continued to attract new investment, mainly from existing funding sources for collaborative projects.

A SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE WELLBEING COLLABORATION PROJECT WAS INITIATED IN 2002

"Calls to Action"

Early child education.

- ⇒ Coordinator appointed
- ⇒ Early Childhood Educators Open Day held 2003
- ⇒ Regular newsletters distributed
- ⇒ ECE Express website launched
- ⇒ Regular "Big Breakfast Bashes" education and networking events held
- ⇒ Toddler Days Out in 2004 and 2005 were a wonderful celebration of our children including education for parents and was a demonstration of collaboration in action

Educators and Communities working together (initially called Schools and Communities....)

- ⇒ Steering group established
- ⇒ Waitakere Education Trust taken on convening role
- ⇒ Successful one day conference held October 2005

Every student in Waitakere leaves school with a Plan / Waitakere Employment and Skills Project

- ⇒ ESOL Directory developed
- ⇒ DVD developed to educate young people about career opportunities in Waitakere
- ⇒ Young Enterprise Scheme
- ⇒ Gateway programme providing work experience for students
- ⇒ Massey work skills demand lead research
- ⇒ Financial Literacy for young people

Every Waitakere Resident has access to affordable, appropriate housing

- ⇒ Collaborative submission made re Residential Tenancies Act
- ⇒ Third Sector Housing Forum held
- ⇒ City Wide Strategy being developed
- ⇒ Secure Home Tenure Research Proposal completed
- ⇒ Tenant Advocacy Service Proposal near completion

Developing a Culture of Inclusion:

- ⇒ Inclusion checklist for meeting planning developed and distributed
- ⇒ Charter of Inclusion developed that has been endorsed by council and WDHB to be signed at the Summit

Information Technology is used by organisations to support wellbeing and collaboration outcomes

- ⇒ Community Events Calendar to be launched at the Summit
- ⇒ WADCOSS website in development
- ⇒ Capacity building proposal developed

Migrants and refugees settle successfully in Waitakere

(Call to Action steering group has become known as New Out West- NOW)

- ⇒ Waitakere Ethnic Board (WEB) established
- ⇒ New Settlers Guide developed
- ⇒ Brokered funds for driver license training
- ⇒ Race Relations Day held in 2004
- ⇒ Migrant Settlement Service being established 2005- will be delivered through existing agencies eg CABs and Community Law Centre

Reduction of Violence against Women and Children

- ⇒ Collaborative funding secured
- ⇒ Home Visitor programme developed and initiated
- ⇒ Social Worker employed to work with repeat victims of domestic violence
- ⇒ Inter-agency Case Management meetings initiated

Te Korowai Manaaki

- ⇒ Promotion of first Five Years Billboard Campaign completed
- ⇒ Mental Wellbeing of Parents- post natal depression support network initiated
- ⇒ Maori and Pacific Islands Caucuses established

- ⇒ PI Caucus mandated as social well being sub-committee to Pacific Island Advisory Board
- ⇒ Pacific Islands Media Plan completed
- ⇒ Collaborative practice guidelines developed
- ⇒ SKIP (Strategies with Kids, Information for Parents)
 - Service Providers hui held
 - Great Parenting Forum held in conjunction with Toddler Day Out
 - Community training programmes delivered
 - Fathering Forums held

Project Staffing

Project Manager, Di Jennings, succeeded Mark Allen as fulltime Project Manager in October 2004. Mark Allen stayed with the project as a part-time advisor until June 2005. Mark is now employed by the council to work on the development of community outcomes, the LTCCP and a Plan for the City.

Wellbeing Report 2004

Another major initiative has been the production of a Wellbeing Report for Waitakere that linked to the Quality of Life Report, the MSD Social Report and to previous Wellbeing reports. It is a summary of Wellbeing in Waitakere through quantitative measures and data and quotes from local organisations; it covers health, education, housing, crime and safety.

The report is available online at www.waitakere.govt.nz/OurPar/collabproj.asp#report

Local Partnerships and Governance Research

This research was a result of a partnership between Waitakere City Council and the University of Auckland. Entitled “ The Potential of Partnerships: Some Key Learnings from Waitakere City” the research identified what has been working well in terms of our collaborative practices in Waitakere, identified the challenges and made recommendations for the future

The research is available online at www.lpg.org.nz

Leveraging funds into Waitakere

For a relatively small investment from funding agencies for coordination of the Collaboration Project, \$1,111,000 has been leveraged into Waitakere over the last three years for the implementation of projects as part of the nine Calls to Action

Wellbeing Summits

Annual Wellbeing Summits have been held since 2002. At the two half day Wellbeing Summits held in 2004, over 130 people from approximately 70 organisations attended the two half days and feedback from participants was very positive. Two new ‘Calls to Action’ were mandated and the original “Calls to Action” were re-energised.

The Wellbeing Summit being planned for 28 October 2005 will be a time for reporting on progress since the 2004 Summit as well as celebrating our many achievements throughout the 2002 to 2005 period. The focus will be on moving forward and gaining agreement on the future direction of collaboration and wellbeing in Waitakere

Communications

Regular newsletters have been produced and distributed to stakeholders. A Collaboration Project webpage has been established on the Waitakere City Council website where key documents and reports - including a directory of acronyms - can be accessed. The web address is

www.waitakere.govt.nz/ourpar/collabproj.asp

Waitakere Online

The Wellbeing Collaboration Project contributed to the development of Waitakere Online that was launched in July 2004. Waitakere Online provides an electronic gateway or portal for Waitakere City providing information, interaction, promotion and communication.

This can be accessed at www.waitakereonline.co.nz

Collaborative Planning and linking with other collaborative processes

The Wellbeing Collaboration Project has regularly facilitated collaborative planning through linking processes, consultation and information and ensuring connections between different government and community initiatives.

The Waitakere Council Long term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and the Community Outcomes process that will feed into the LTCCP are seen as key processes enabling high level planning and agreement. The Wellbeing Collaboration Project has worked closely with the community and council staff to ensure that Collaboration Project outcomes are integrated into the LTCCP and community outcomes process.

The Collaboration Project and “Calls to Action” have also been fed into the Local Services Mapping being carried out by Family and Community Services.

Social Enterprise

Social enterprise is an emerging new paradigm (based on age old principles) wherein community organisations undertake income producing activity to create financial sustainability and independence. Throughout 2005/06, the Collaboration Project will be working with UNITEC and a panel of key stakeholders to develop research that will identify best practice for social enterprise development in Waitakere City. It is intended that the research findings will be tested through a flax roots project.

Evaluation

Midpoint evaluation of the collaboration process indicated overwhelmingly that participating people and groups found the framework excellent, the process useful and even enjoyable. Some groups were finding the level of participation in forums to be organisationally demanding and have reviewed their levels of participation.

External evaluation for the 2002 to 2005 period is currently being negotiated; it is expected that the evaluation will provide an in depth picture of the outcomes that have been achieved and enable further reflection on effective collaborative practice in Waitakere.

THE CURRENT STATUS OF COLLABORATIVE WORK

The coordination and promotion of collaborative work occurs at two levels:

- an overview level through the Project Manager, Di Jennings
- and at an operational level through strategic brokers attached to each Call to Action.

Some of the brokers are specifically contracted to the “Call to Action” area (eg Cissy Rock, followed by Anita Weir, for Early Childhood Education) and some are provided by the Council (eg Monica

Sharma for New Out West) or by networking organisations (eg Disability Information Waitakere Network for the Culture of Inclusion “Call to Action”)

It is our expectation that most of the “Calls to Action” will continue whatever direction the Wellbeing Collaboration Project goes in. These “Call to Action” steering groups believe strongly that they are moving forward and are having an impact in their focus area.

OPPORTUNITIES EMERGING FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002

Over the last year a number of government agencies have been reorganising and developing their local engagement capacity. This has often been in response to the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002), and government agencies support for the Council’s Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP).

This process includes documenting the Community Outcomes, or community aspirations, for the period 2006-2016. There is an opportunity for the Waitakere Wellbeing Calls to Action to maximise government agencies involvement in supporting responses to particular Community Outcomes under the LTCCP; this could be achieved through aligning Calls to Action with LTCCP community outcome areas focussed on social wellbeing.

Government agencies support for Community Outcomes also provides opportunities for the “Calls to Action” to link to localised central government initiatives. Examples of this include:

- Strong partnerships in the ‘under fives’ area for co-ordination for an alternatives to physical discipline campaign and to support Pacific community engagement
- Pilot funding for the migrant resettlement service
- The digital strategy and its potential to fund community based information technology development

The growing number of potential new collaborative ventures being proposed by organisations and forums combined with an increasing academic and formal recognition of collaboration and partnerships as a mechanism for addressing issues that lie between organisations and silos of thinking (eg Local Partnerships and Governance Research) is putting increasing demand on current initiatives. Integration of these various collaborative initiatives into a broader strategy will require independent staffing capacity.

At this stage the Collaboration Strategy Group is awaiting the results of the evaluation to enable informed discussion of various options for the future form and resourcing of this initiative, in the context of Waitakere’s City Plan.

THE NEXT PHASE OF THE WELLBEING STRATEGY

The following suggestions for the future build on Megan Courtney and David Craig’s “Local Partnerships & Governance” research¹ in Waitakere City.

“Call to Action” areas

As mentioned above most of the current “Calls to Action” are well established, but coordination and information will still be needed to support them in the future. It is the recommendation of the Collaboration Strategy Group that resources should be sourced for the continued engagement of a Collaboration Project Manager. This position is currently funded through a number of government agencies with support from Waitakere City Council.

Infrastructure

Taking into consideration the new personnel and organisations wishing to participate in collaborative work and the solid base of experience already here, we need to continue to invest in building a higher quality of collaboration knowledge and skill.

We have the research (Local Partnerships and Governance research), experience and opportunities (e.g. Unitec's not for profit courses) for skill development, to review the infrastructure framework and to continue to develop operational and accountability models and policies.

Connections to environmental, economic and cultural wellbeing

The Wellbeing Collaboration project has come principally from a **social perspective** but we have endeavoured to create links to other wellbeing areas, particularly to economic development. With the advent of the Local Government Act 2002 and its formal recognition of the four wellbeings - social economic, environmental and cultural - Waitakere City Council will be working towards facilitating a framework that embraces all four wellbeings and encompasses other models of wellbeing as well, in particular Maori and Pacific.

Poverty

Analysis indicates increased levels of deprivation in the City. There is currently no collaborative initiative in the city specifically targeted to address this, although individual programmes are in place, for example Work and Income placement of Waitakere residents in paid employment and the Working for Families package. One option may be the agreement to develop a collaborative strategy to understand and address poverty in the City.

An idea that has been raised at a number of forums is to collaboratively target areas of increasing poverty with a view to having no areas of high deprivation by 2015. To progress this idea, a better understanding of the issues and the places to locally influence would be needed

Social enterprise

Sustainable funding is one the major challenges for community organisations and impacts on organisations' ability to participate in collaborative processes. Social enterprise involves the creation of independent funding streams by community organisations through enterprise activity to enable further development and the provision of social outcomes. A research panel of key Waitakere stakeholders is currently working with UNITEC to develop and implement a best practice model of social enterprise for Waitakere City.

Many overseas models of social enterprise are working particularly well in neighbourhood based community organisations

A neighbourhood based approach

From a community development perspective, a neighbourhood based approach is imperative, although it is very resource hungry. There are currently two neighbourhood based projects in Waitakere City that are linked to the Waitakere City Council – the Ranui Action Project (RAP) and McLaren Park Community Project (MPCP).

A scoping exercise is currently being carried out by the council in Massey to start to develop a profile of the area and ascertain gaps in services.

The Te Korowai Manaaki "Call to Action" has identified a neighbourhood project in their strategic plan and is planning to carry out a scoping exercise to ascertain the viability of addressing safety of under fives via a neighbourhood model.

Effects and responses to urban intensification

The Regional Growth Strategy and recent local planning to accommodate this major growth indicates that there will be increased housing intensification around town and neighbourhood centres will be required. It is anticipated that there will be high concentrations of multi-storey apartment communities that have not been seen before in New Zealand.

This will create new stresses and strains due to the rate and quantity of population growth. Identifying and understanding the most effective areas and timing of intervention, building collective responses and securing the investment in the social infrastructure will be imperative to ensure we create successful communities rather than ghettos and social problem centres. One option going forward could be the formation of a Waitakere panel to promote better understanding of the changes, to identify the best responses and to advocate their action.

Collaborative Planning

The proposed "Plan for the City" should enable more collective and cohesive planning that may replace the current *coordinating planning* work that has been part of the Collaborative Project. Time and effort would need to be applied to ensure it is robustly and transparently linked or aligned to the Collaborative Project's work and processes

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS FORWARD FOR THE WELLBEING COLLABORATION PROJECT

- Carry out a robust evaluation of the Collaboration Project from 2002 to 2005 and disseminate the findings to all stakeholders
- Dependent on the results of the evaluation, endorse continued resourcing for the co-ordination of collaborative projects to ensure alignment between and within initiatives
- Utilise the proposed City Plan as the key strategic document for collaboration within Waitakere City for existing and future collaborative projects e.g. Local Services Mapping; this should include robust evaluation, monitoring and reporting processes suitable for all stakeholders.
- Ensure the proposed City Plan includes a priority area of understanding the issues around urban intensification and poverty, including establishing a working group or project group on this issue

CONCLUSION

The Wellbeing Collaboration Project has played a significant role in Waitakere over the last three years enabling a strongly networked and aligned approach to wellbeing work in our city. Government initiatives have been engaged efficiently and significant new approaches and projects have been launched.

Collaborative activity has occurred at a strategic level as well as through the nine "Calls to Action" operating at the flax roots. Strategic brokerage at cross-sectoral and inter-sectoral levels has enabled the leverage of substantial funds for the many projects that have emerged as a result of the nine "Calls to Action".

The project has also enabled a collaborative response to a range of issues including community outcomes, the establishment of a youth transitions service and Local Services Mapping.

The challenge for the Wellbeing Summit in 2005 will be to explore the future for collaboration and wellbeing in Waitakere City. We will need to consider:

- How can the Collaboration Project be linked or aligned with other collaborative processes in the city?
- How can we respond to the changing context in Waitakere City such as population growth, urban intensification and changes in social demographics?
- How can we align the project with the four wellbeings: environmental, economic and cultural as well as social that are identified in the Local Government Act 2002?
- How to explore a new framework that holds all of the four wellbeings and moves to transcend arbitrary silos, as well as encompassing other models of wellbeing, in particular Māori and Pacific?

These are challenging questions and the answers are not simple - and they will not be fully answered in a one day summit. But it is anticipated that at the 2005 Wellbeing Summit we will work together creatively to identify a general direction and some next steps for the ongoing development of collaboration and wellbeing work in Waitakere City.

Warm Waitakere Regards
Di Jennings
Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project Manager

