

Partnerships Under the Spotlight

Workshop Three

November 18th 2003

Welcome and karakia

Introduction to tonight's workshop from Megan

Presentation from David on Social Sector Decentralisation
and what it means for Waitakere

Group Session One:

Decentralisation - key issues and implications for Waitakere

Break for Coffee and Dessert

Feedback from Session One

Plenary Session on Partnerships

- ⊙ What we haven't talked about....
- ⊙ New ideas
- ⊙ Key concerns
- ⊙ Ideas on next steps for discussion

Wrap Up

Karakia to close

Partnerships Under the Spotlight Workshop 3

Social Sector Decentralisation and Local Partnerships ~ Rhetoric, Realities and Next Steps for Waitakere ~

Introduction to this Paper and Workshop 3

A culture of collaboration has been developing in Waitakere City for many years. Along with it has been a strong local commitment to community engagement in decision making¹. The Waitakere Way – as seen most prominently in the Wellbeing Collaboration Project - is about central government, local government and the community sector working together to proactively develop shared visions, plans and projects to enhance wellbeing for Waitakere's 180 000 residents.

This discussion paper considers the context for collaboration and decentralisation both in Waitakere and nationally. We then take a look at some of the current opportunities and challenges facing those trying to work in a decentralised, collaborative context in the City. Lastly, we put forward some possible options around the "hard stuff" for further local discussion and debate.

We welcome your feedback on this background document for WORKSHOP 3 and look forward to ongoing dialogue on next steps in 2004.
See you on November 18th

David and Megan

1. Background: The context for Decentralisation in Waitakere

It looks like, one way or another, we are in for even more attempts to do strategic planning together across agencies and communities, to innovate collaboratively, and to join up and integrate local services at the local level. Perhaps in the future, we will see more services (maybe policing or education??) and their governance devolved to local or regional control (health has had it happen already). If devolved, they will be required to plan collaboratively, and engage local government and community. **Expect more collaborative meetings and obligatory consultation!! Things are going to get more complex locally...**

Despite all the potential for confusion and mess, the core ideas in decentralisation are pretty simple: rather than central government planning for and providing social services on its own, there's a belief that there are gains to be had from local cities /communities/agencies being more involved in both service planning and delivery. Some see it as **building efficiency**, others see it as **a way for local people to get more control and accountability around issues, resources and services**. Others see it as **a recipe for more inequality**.

¹ For further detail see "From the Wild West to the Waitakere Way – a celebration of 20 years of partnership and collaboration in the West" April 2003 www.lpg.org.nz

Given local history and the ongoing development of collaboration, both nationally and in Waitakere, the following factors are seen as strengths for the City in this current climate of decentralisation:

- the broad wellbeing collaboration framework in Waitakere is based on a long (20 year) local history of working together, being innovative and taking risks
- there is often considerable local community sector voice and input in local wellbeing collaboration discussions/processes
- strong relationships (based in trust, energy and shared commitment) have developed (and are developing) between the community and government sectors (central and local) which mean that people **want** to work together and they feel accountable to each other for action
- there's a collective desire to work inclusively (cultural, sectoral)
- there's a jointly funded coordination resource for wellbeing collaboration at a citywide strategic level (with a project manager)
- the wellbeing collaboration model has been open and responsive to opportunities/challenges that arise
- some initial work begun on strategic citywide process issues (information, planning, funding etc) that will pave the way for Long Term Council Community Planning (LTCCP)
- a number of jointly funded/managed collaborative projects are underway eg. Waitakere Skills and Employment Project, Ranui Action Project etc
- nationally, Waitakere has a reputation as a City that's well connected, innovative and able to get things done – hence lots of pilots are based in Waitakere

However, while in collaboration terms, Waitakere can generally be seen to be a step ahead of most cities, there are many gaps and challenges emerging – some would even say crises. Some areas for major concern include:

- currently lots of disjointed, often uncoordinated different little decentralised versions of local engagement/partnership building, many of which are not well linked into what's going on locally, nor back into the “big picture” at the centre.
- national policy context seems quite confused. MoSD, the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Internal Affairs, the State Services Commission and Treasury are all interested in decentralisation and coordinating services and strategy locally. The Review of the Centre process has initiated some whole of government debate but from the outside it looks like no one in Wellington is providing really strong core policy leadership/implementation. Different agencies have different understandings and agendas.
- resourcing, including:
 - inadequate funding for coordination at both strategic and project levels
 - inadequate funding to implement collaborative projects
 - failure to implement population based funding ie. Waitakere getting a historical rather than “fair” share of social service funding
 - in more mainstream settings (health, education, welfare), where the big budgets are, very little actual, substantial joint strategic and operational planning happens at the local level: instead, again, there are lots of little joint projects, which might or might not become something more substantive depending on initial successes.
- significant “people” capacity issues for government and community sectors alike

- no strategic or funding mechanisms to link who lives in Waitakere(both now and in the future) and what levels/types of services they require now and in the future
- rising inequalities – more people at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum in Waitakere and no coordinated local/regional and national responses to this to date
- mixed messages from the Centre (Wellington) – eg. “keep experimenting but there’s no more new money for the ideas/solutions you come up with”
- differing levels of responsibility, accountability and flexibility at the local level – some government departments like MOSD have some flexibility at local management level others such as Housing New Zealand and the Ministry of Education have little
- unfunded mandates, including:
 - at local government level new Local Government Act (2002) means Waitakere City(and all Councils) have now have a strengthened mandate to promote local wellbeing, and plan/perform according to “community” defined outcomes via a Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) process. But Councils have been given no devolved funds to achieve enhanced city wellbeing. I.e. responsibility for local social sector outcomes lie with Councils, but there is no legislative requirement on central government agencies
 - at central government level, many senior local public servants have collaboration written into their contracts, but again don’t have access to a pot of money to assist/create local incentives for working together
- the Waitakere Way of joining up central government, local government and community sectors is leading edge but not all that well understood in Wellington circles. It’s viewed as innovative and interesting but it hasn’t emerged as the “model way forward” with strong central champions to push it along.
- collaboration fatigue – too much to do, too much effort required, too long to do it, and for (so far) mixed results ...major issues of capacity within all community and government sectors

So, while there’s a lot in Waitakere’s favour, there’s also a lot that actually hangs in the balance. But whether we want to think about it or not, decentralisation is happening all around us, in unplanned and partly planned ways:

- **So what exactly is decentralisation?**
- **How to understand it and respond?**
- **What’s at stake?**
- **What might make it work better, or for better outcomes?**

2. What is Decentralisation and why does it Matter Now??

In terms of language and definitions, decentralisation is a blanket term (like partnerships and consultation) which covers many situations. There are basically two specific ‘deliberate’ approaches to making decentralisation happen and at least one incremental/ more adhoc one as discussed below:

2.1 Deconcentration

Deconcentration involves central governments retaining ultimate control of budgets and services, but having more staff and more functions located locally, so as to maximise local engagement and knowledge.

- In NZ, a number of departments are increasing their local presence by deploying senior policy analysts in regions eg. MoSD, DIA, HNZ, and by increasing some aspects of branch level capacity to collaborate locally.
- Deconcentration is more an incremental, step-by-step approach, which keeps accountability, major planning and funding control within the centre. It is compatible with the process of local strategic planning and coordinated service delivery outlined in the recently released “Mosaics” Report which was undertaken as part of the Review of the Centre.
- It keeps the lines of accountability mainly up and down, between central and branch or regional offices.

2.2 Devolution

Devolution is the ‘stronger’ form of decentralisation. It involves passing ownership, funding and responsibility for running programmes and monitoring their effects over to local agencies.

- In NZ, the District Health Boards are the most important example: they get an elected board (**mandate**), and are allocated **funding** to enact defined local **functions**.
- Some Maori health and wellbeing outcomes/programmes are devolved to iwi or urban Maori groups
- Devolution depending on how it is done can create more direct accountability at local levels, and enable real local variation on how local issues are addressed.
- Without checks and balances, devolution can lead to greater inequalities between regions, and create other difficulties including local capture (see below)

2.3. Growing Local Capacity

Incremental local capacity growth is what happens as local community groups, service providers, local government, and central government staff look around and say, well, look at us, why can't we do this here? This above all is Waitakere's story.

- This is bottom up decentralisation, smell-of-an-oily-rag innovation: (eg the rise of Te Whanau O Waipareira, local community safety initiatives, Wellbeing and Interagency collaboration, many local partnerships, regional sustainability initiatives, new migrants programmes)
- While wider trends and changes (eg Treaty recognition) help, this decentralisation happens one project (or one pilot programme) at a time. It's a matter of constantly clawing down service delivery functions and funding, and re-proving your mandates. Programmes are cobbled together until they become locally sustainable, and/ or become part of national programmes. Key issues are sustained funding, ongoing local governance capacity, and wider equality issues, as very different things happen in different localities.

2.4. So, what have we got?

Seen against these definitions, **in practice, things have been very uneven**, and incremental, as people have tried local initiatives, often very bottom up, without sustained funding, or much sense of what decentralisation processes should involve.

- There is lots of incremental, innovative (and maybe unplanned) stuff happening, along with many pilots. Hard work, never that secure?
- There is a corresponding creeping, de facto deconcentration from government (more local staff and ‘consultation’ and local planning),
- and just a little planned devolution (DHBs, PHOs).
- Without a wider plan and vision, both innovation and funding have been uneven and patchy and sometimes it feels pretty chaotic

3. So, what’s at stake in Decentralisation?

3.1 What decentralisation and collaboration promises...

So, what are the benefits, really? The importance of things being done ‘as close to the ground as possible’², and by a range of stakeholders (including Councils, Iwi and community agencies etc) is based on some of the following expected gains:

- Improved local service delivery – services designed and delivered by locals for locals, overlaps/duplications avoided, possible cost efficiencies
- More responsiveness to local needs – flexibility to implement broad national policies in the context of local priorities, more tailored local service outcomes/needs
- More community engagement in decision making – ease of stakeholder involvement in both services planning and delivery from the local level
- Improved integration of systems and processes – across sectors and in terms of information, monitoring, consultation, research, services planning and delivery which are needed to address complex social problems affecting many people/families/communities etc
- Strengthened relationships between a range of stakeholders covering a range of sectors and interests which helps to increase trust, shared understandings of issues and solutions and build local “social capital”
- Provided there are wider checks and balances, decentralising *can* help support improved local social justice outcomes: but where these don’t exist, there are also major risks (see below)

So the big picture rhetoric of local partnerships and decentralisation policies promise a lot.....

3.2 Some Risks of Social Sector Devolution

- Diseconomies of scale – it doesn’t stack up financially to do things at smaller area (city/district) level ie. increased administration costs, duplication of information systems.
- Local capture – minority voices/vocal interest groups push their own banner without regard to “bigger local picture” (eg social justice) issues and needs
- Increase in inequality – the rich/skilled are more politically active and use the local systems for their own end first. Decentralisation accentuates local resource and social differences. For local political reasons, some places won’t address poverty.
- Inadequately resourced devolved responsibilities and functions mean resourcing shortfalls have to be met locally
- Cross boundary issues (regional) more able to be ignored- makes joined up regional planning harder

² Often this is referred to as the principle of subsidiarity which means that what can be done at the local level should be done there, rather than say in Wellington.

- Diverse capacity at the local level currently– devolution means higher levels of skillsets, leadership, experience are required at central government, local government and community sector levels within each locality
- Social justice is at risk. Redistribution mechanisms require long term (and bipartisan!) political commitment if local social justice outcomes are to be enhanced and sustained
- Iwi, the community and the community sector left out local decision making processes because mandating and representation issues are just “too hard”

All this means that while there is a certain buzz in the air about collaboration in Waitakere, there are very real doubts as to what local collaboration can really deliver long term.....is the City being too ambitious??? Or is it just a matter of taking things slowly and building as we go??

4. Making Decentralisation and local partnerships work: what needs to be lined up...

Making decentralisation and partnerships work on the ground was never going to be easy, neither was it going to be a short term process. To be really successful, there’s a number of different levels or layers of activity that need to be happening at all at once. These can be looked at in a number of different ways:

4.1 *Aligning Resources, Mandates and Functions locally or regionally*

To ensure that collaborative effort at the local level is effective resources, mandates and functions need to **ALL** be in place and linked up, locally. If either one of these areas is missing, or not properly organised, then the ability to actually deliver on the ground will be compromised.

Resources	Project/service funding People/staff, including strategic brokers/coordinators Supports eg. car, phone etc
Mandates	Having the authority(to delegating it to an appropriate body) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make decisions • allocate resources • take certain courses of action • do things in a certain way • be responsible or accountable for certain things
Functions	Sectors (eg. health, education etc) Services (eg. for children), and Processes (eg. planning, funding, information, monitoring, policy)

4.2 *Aligning the Political, Strategic and Operational/Technical*

Implementing successful local partnerships require a number of different structures, processes and skill sets working alongside each other.

- There’s the political process with elected representatives (and/or senior officials) who make overarching key decisions on strategy, resources and processes. They give guidance and set the general direction for strategic and operational levels to develop and implement. There’s also the political in terms of advocacy, negotiation and deal making!
- At the strategic level the “what to, how to, when to” questions are discussed, debated and more often than not, brokered.
- And at the operational level, actual implementation of strategies, plans, budgets and services etc are carried out.

4.3 Aligning Central Government, Local Government and Community Effort

The Waitakere Way of working frequently sees central government, local government and the community sector working together. Sometimes, it's about two of three in partnership, and in the Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration process, it's all three sectors. All three sectors have different **roles** to play, bring different **resources** and **experiences** to the table and all have different **ways of working**. These differences must all be understood and accommodated to some degree. Ensuring that all partners have the capacity to participate and work together is currently a major local challenge.

4.4 How they All Fit together.....

As noted above making local partnerships happen requires a lot of things to be happening all at once and a number of tasks, people and layers to be effectively linked together. The glue between the layers of course are things like feedback loops, effective mandated representation, brokers and well established communication and accountability processes and skilled strategic brokers.

5. Where to Next?? Some options for further discussion.....

Though there are many possible courses of action for Waitakere, we've identified three major platforms that we'd like to put forward for further discussion. The first option is pretty much happening already, but needs strengthening. The second two would require a re-think, and a decision to push for these significant structural changes through political as well as collaborative channels.

- Making what we have work better locally
- Working more closely with Wellington to achieve systemic change
- Being politically activist AND collaborative, here in nationally

5.1 Making what we have work better

This strategy involves building on and tweaking the current innovative, bottom up processes of local welling collaboration already underway in Waitakere, and making them work better. The focus within this option remains Waitakere and trying to do the best we can with what we have – but pushing for increased collaboration based funding from Wellington will be critical for ongoing success.

The Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project has thrown up a number of innovative new initiatives, and some clever brokers managed to attract some useful funding for a number of them, on a short-term or pilot basis.

Putting enough resources to actually DO stuff on the ground means significant discretionary funding been made available from the centre. It would be a way of both building local coordination expertise, drawing in more strategic knowledge into planning, and extending experimentation/evidence around what works. Small geographical area funding such as Ranui Action Project have had notable successes in terms of building community infrastructure: getting a sufficient infrastructure around intersectoral, social sector planning can be seen as up scaling that kind of success.

What about.....

- **What could happen if \$1 million was put on the table, to be divided among six or seven locally visioned 'calls to action' and associated projects– ie. mandated and agreed to by central government, local government and community agencies in Waitakere .**

- In the same way, it's worth imagining what could happen were **each City Council in the Auckland Region allocated a similar amount (say a couple of million) which could be spent on wellbeing or poverty issues emerging from their individual LTCCP**. "Upping" the incentives for intersectoral planning with this kind of '**honey pot funding**' is not actually that expensive in the context of a \$4billion fiscal surplus.

5.2 Concerted Effort into Working more Closely with Wellington to Achieve Structural Change

Strengthening government strategic innovation in decentralisation by advocating for/assisting with systemic change within the centre ie. meaning that mandates, functions and resources could actually be aligned at the local level. Population based funding would likely be required as would 'beefed up' local accountability processes

Lining up mandates, functions and funding locally actually requires structural change in current government systems. It would also involve coming to **better population based funding for local social services**, so that when local demographics change then service levels and funding movements can be planned accordingly.

Implementing this would mean **stronger links with eg District Health Boards, and much greater shared participation in each different government agency's planning processes.**

How about **piloting the kinds of regional strategy and local services coordination activities outlined in Mosaics? Done properly this would see some key officials from Wellington seconded to Waitakere to assist with local implementation and implications of the Waitakere experience reflected back into central systems and legislation.** This process would put some much needed energy and funding behind coordinated planning and enhance Wellington's understanding of the Waitakere model of collaboration.

Funding allocation for government departments (and community agencies) could be dependent on participating in genuine intersectoral planning processes, and developing community wide visioning and prioritising processes. Success here will depend in part on **beefing up local mandating and accountability.** Funding could also be contingent upon a widened engagement with the variety of forums that already exist in the City, for example via: the Intersector Group, Wellbeing Summits, sector networks eg. Waitakere Shared Vision for Mental Health, Pacific Islands Advisory Board. This is to ensure that issues are raised and ways forward debated on a regular and proactive basis.

Local accountability isn't an easy issue. But many people have a conviction that more could be done to sensibly **enhance mutual accountability between local agencies, community groups and elected officials.** With shared goals, plans and projects, clearer local responsibilities, consistent and mandated representation, joint monitoring/indicator programmes (services and outcomes) local collaborators can begin to build sustainable ways of keeping themselves, each other, and outside agencies more accountable to both issues of big picture change, and local community priorities.

Put these elements together in a sector or locality, and you are building agreed or common, community mandated platform for accountability around key issues: what might be called '**common accountability frameworks**'.

What about working with officials from Wellington to see what a Waitakere Wellbeing Charter or Common Accountability Platform could/should look like – one that talks about obligations, roles, accountabilities, linkages to the Waitakere LTCCP and resourcing. Although many of the requisite elements of such a framework are currently present or developing in Waitakere, nothing is really formally written down or linked in a comprehensive way. Because of this, accountabilities are based more on people and relationships, rather than on structures and processes etc. It's not an either/or – to sustainably embed the big picture collaboration framework in Waitakere, both of these areas will need to be addressed.

5.3 Time to Advocate as well as Collaborate

A stronger mix of collaboration and political activism/ advocacy, for action on service inequalities, and on wider social inequalities that put pressure on services and people.

A community activist, concerned that collaboration alone wasn't going to deliver services or outcomes for growing numbers of poorer people in Waitakere, recently asked: '**How do you be 'politically collaborative', or political and or collaborative at the same time?**'

At the moment, current collaboration processes are mostly practical and strategic/technical exercises: figuring out the how of people working together within existing resources and constraints. At a citywide level, Waitakere has been quite successful in this, and important experience has been gained. But sometimes a practical technical pulling together of resources is just not enough.

There's a dilemma - if you don't get stropky you miss out, but if you do get stropky you stand the chance of getting offside with other partners. Some would argue that in recent times in Waitakere there has been **too much collaboration and not enough activism/advocacy** and that the balance needs to tip back the other way....

Some key areas, such as social-economic inequality, aren't going to be solved at the local level alone. Some of these issues will require fundamental structural change at the NATIONAL level. Being able to be clear and strong about national vs local responsibilities for action is key.

Obviously this role is not for everyone: public servants, for example, are not allowed to be political, or to lobby. So in the cases where there is local agreement (between community and government) on needs, the activist roles will fall back on to the community sector and local government.

So what do we do about it.....?

Some Potential Questions for Discussion on November 18th

Assuming that we want to have more local control and involvement in the social sector in Waitakere

- How does my organisation need to position itself to facilitate devolution of certain services to it?
 - What types of services are being decentralised?
 - How can we make sure that an array of organisations (i.e. not just the big ones) are considered and involved in planning of such services
- How can we have an influence over the planning and implementation process that ensures services are secured in a 'for Maori, by Maori' way?
- Is the current approach, of incremental, one step at a time innovation in decentralisation, the best one for Waitakere? What are the costs and benefits from this process? How could it be improved?
- Are there sectors where devolution could happen faster, sooner? Which sectors, and what would be needed?
- What sectors would more collaborative, strategic local planning help in? What sectors could do with more local control over resources, more service coordination, strengthened local mandates and collaborative monitoring?
- How can people participate in collaborative local innovation in decentralisation and partnerships, and still be involved in wider and more political pushes for disadvantaged groups, equality and Treaty issues?

Summary Notes from Workshop Three

“Social Sector Decentralisation – Impacts and Implications for Waitakere ”

Tuesday November 18th 2003

1. Introduction to Decentralisation and What’s Happening from David Craig

Major Questions:

- What are the core words, languages, ideas and issues surrounding decentralisation?
- What is at stake during decentralisation?

At present, major decentralisations (e.g. health) seem to be run as if it has never been done before. It’s as if government hasn’t looked internationally to learn about the pitfalls etc before starting on the decentralisation path and now see people falling into all the same old traps.

Context for Decentralisation is Bottom up AND Top Down in Waitakere

- Waitakere City has a general 'feeling' of collaboration and networking – there’s a local desire to do more and have more local control (bottom up)
- The government has asked what gains there are in joining things up locally (top down) and has
- There is an urban Maori desire for devolution
- The government uses the terms 'Regional Coordination' and 'Integrated Service Delivery' but these are slippery terms. E.g. what is a 'region'?
- Long Term Council Community Planning (LTCCP) is part of decentralisation

What is decentralisation?

- 'Decentralisation' is a blanket term - it means different things to different people. To some it means privatisation, to some it means getting power off the bureaucrats and giving it to the little people.
- 'Deconcentration'= more central government agencies and agency workers living and working locally - not all concentrated in Wellington
- 'Devolution'= devolving a whole lot of things at once - control, funding and responsibilities - to a local group. It has to all happen at once, otherwise things go wrong.
- Another form of decentralisation (that hasn’t been written about elsewhere) is growing local capacity. Where ongoing increases in local skills & capacity sees places like Waitakere taking on new areas. Overtime more resources, mandates, responsibilities are slowly devolved and collaborative efforts are incrementally upscaled.

What's at stake: Potential gains

- People on both the left and the right of the political continuum see decentralisation as a good thing, for different reasons.
- Those on the right see decentralisation as privatisation. They see that decentralisation means more knowledge and information. They see that it will increase input/ output efficiencies - there will be less wastage and duplication. There is an illusion among the right that decentralisation will decrease costs, when in fact it will not.
- The political left see decentralisation as a positive thing because it will mean that local interest groups can have their say, and they will be able to hold the government accountable and that service outcomes will be better.
- For families, decentralisation can be seen as a positive thing because it means that they won't have to deal with so many agencies.
- Decentralisation means horizontal accountability - agencies will be relying on each other more
- Decentralisation means a potential focus on local outcomes. Local organisations and groups can work towards positive outcomes together (e.g. postnatal health: midwives, plunket, hospitals, doctors can all work together to improve postnatal health)

What's at stake: Risks

- More fragmentation from incompatibility of systems eg. Uniform data entry in the health sector - it is very difficult to get different people in different places to enter data in the same way.
- Increase in costs – administration, coordination, consultation, service delivery
- The big picture can get blown out of view easily. E.g. in America, schools depend on local resources, which perpetuates inequalities between rich and poor areas
- Messy decision-making, endless meetings and process: collaboration fatigue

Lining things up locally: What's needed?

- Refer to page six of document, it is necessary to line up/ coordinate:
- mandates, functions and resources with
- Political, strategic, practical /operations and
- Central government, local government and the community effort
- There is a need to define mandates, functions and resources. For example, mandates: people need to be responsible and accountable for certain tasks/ roles. But what makes them legitimate? Who says they have the authority to act?

So far: drip-fed decentralisation

- Health is one agency which is 'lining up' relatively well
 - But how much real coordination of planning, consultation, strategy etc actually goes on?
- Social sector initiatives generally all led quite independently by different govt departments
- Letting go of mandates for doing things but not resources

The mess: limited coordination of planning, consultation, strategy, boundaries, timing....collaboration complexity and now signs of collaboration fatigue

Three Future Strategies for Wellbeing Collaboration in Waitakere

1. Building locally, on existing wellbeing/ collaboration: more funding in the middle, better mandated/ supported representation, Better supported brokers
2. Working harder with Wellington: aligning mandates, funding, functions. building common local accountability structures; responsive, population based service funding
3. Being collaborative AND doing more political advocacy: the social justice struggle for responses to poverty, inequality

2. **Key themes from the Workshop Session**

- Devolution as an experiment has been an amazing journey.
- Knowing what Waitakere has control of and what it doesn't is hard sometimes
- More common now for bureaucrats to get out of the office and into the community, taking their skillsets/tools/knowledge out to share with others. Slowly realising that the community isn't something to be feared
- the main thing is growing the people to do stuff locally - it takes time and the importance of doing/investing in this is underestimated.
- Having some decent community funding is important to continuity and sustainability of visions and action.
- Mandate to speak for/on behalf of others is key - in focus groups with Maori, questions about the genuineness of that mandate will always be asked.
- Need to create and sustain clear visions for what is being/to be done locally - key to anchoring the big picture.
- Still little understanding by many in the Centre of how things practically work in the regions, little understanding or appreciation of local issues

Push and Pull Factors at Work....

- Both "push" and "pull" factors are evidenced in Waitakere in terms of decentralisation– some think it's just about government abdicating responsibility but it's actually not.
- Agencies can not be told to collaborate.... there needs to be trust from within the agencies. Constructive collaboration – people/agencies get together and decide what they can do together to improve outcomes etc vs Instructive collaboration – told from on high that you must work in partnership
- Need to continually develop processes that support agencies to work with each other, it's not always a natural thing

For Local Government...

- Concerns over who funds decentralisation, at present it seems that ratepayers are funding it in Waitakere, but how can they afford on an ongoing basis? Acts (eg. prostitution, gambling, dog control etc) relating to decentralisation are passed but financial assistance does not follow from central government in terms of setting up local consultation processes or implementation
- Council's role increasingly important:
 - can use their resources, knowledge, skillsets and networks to help communities become more involved.
 - Council staff, along with Councillors gain their mandates for action directly from the community and act (more than ever) as brokers between community sector and government.
- Ongoing difficulties in communicating with central government – need to be more effective for the City's sake

Funding

- Many guidelines and strategies have come down from the centre in health – but very few with funding and many requiring intersectoral work...working within existing resources isn't always possible
- Potential for localities and small organisations to miss out in the current decentralisation of community education to regions is huge – Auckland University Continuing Education on same footing as night classes run by small schools – no local vision to ensure organisations regionally are working to a big local picture
- Some population groups have received more money than others – in health, older and younger people.
- A big policy issue for government in terms of whether it puts \$\$ into places where decentralised projects will work (ie. Waitakere) vs into communities that really need it but don't have as much capacity to do things as we do
- Funding according to needs hasn't happened – with Lotteries, funding goes out to the regions from the centre according to the number of applications received as opposed to population/community need.
- When calculations are done for regional-based funding – it shows that that a lot more funding is needed for Auckland, much to the displeasure of the rest of the country. Aucklanders are not good at mobilising and voicing their opinions. Aucklanders have a guilt complex about being JAFAs and that has meant we have learnt to put up with the deprivation of funding eg. for infrastructure/transport etc.
- Some say what the community wants is more funding and others say what the community wants is more say in where the \$\$ go as opposed to taking on funding and responsibilities for doing it
- Getting money in advance of mandates and functions is just as dangerous as not getting any money at all
- Getting a mandate can take a while and come too long after funding is given – means some communities fight/compete which can be very destructive. Or resources can come too late as they come too long after mandating and people give up. General agreement that it's probably better to have vision/know what you want to do/how you'll do it before getting the \$\$\$\$\$

What's in it for us??

- Decentralisation will only work if there are gains for the community. The more decentralisation there is the more the community will get involved. Factories are being shifted from Penrose to Waitakere and this is supposed to grow wealth. If it doesn't then there is no gain.
- If the Government wants decentralisation they should pay for it. Deregulation has led to industry going off-shore and many being put out of work, but decentralisation must give benefits to the community. Local government and the community should talk about whether or not it is in their interest.
- Concerns about lower decile people being imported from elsewhere in the Region...huge future impacts on local services (government and community)
- As decentralisation rolls out there could be a possible burn-out of volunteers - too many meetings or too much work for the voluntary (as opposed to the general community) sector to sustain.

Doing it locally...

- Waitakere great place for trying to link things up at a small/local level but there isn't a one size fits all across the country. Eg SCAF (Ranui Action Project) has good support in places like Waitakere but it struggles in Mangakino. Not every project will work as well but places like Mangakino could end up being even more neglected as a result.
- Tension between regional and local – differing skill sets and capabilities and different opportunities for communities to practically be involved

Building Leadership and Communication

- There's a need for stronger intersectoral work and for improved communications horizontally and vertically. Only strong leadership will make this happen
- Leadership key at the local level – strong leadership helps generate resources
- Good communication is key - community, politicians, governance and management people (both local and central government people to all talk to each other whereas just two of these groups often talk and the others don't. It requires ministers, ministers officers, our councillors and our officers to talk together, not just 2 of these 4 levels to talk to each other.
- There needs to be more feedback loops to the community that reports back on what's happening with decentralisation in the City – people need to know what the impact on the ground is of all the various activities going on.
- There is a lack of political communication at national and local levels. A vision can happen if people are collaborating around that vision – it's about how national/local visions can be brought together to support each other that's key. More effort needs to go into this

Growing Inequity.....both political and socio-economic

- Local needs of Maori/Pacific not adequately voiced because of way the local political system works – impossible to get elected under the first past post system. There is no Maori or Pacific Island representation on the Waitakere City Council and until there is, more local control will NOT improve inequalities
- need proportional representation in local government to keep big picture inequality issues firmly on the table and also to ensure that a wider range of social issues are recognised, acknowledged and actioned. Social inequalities are something that local government has to looking at and addressing
- tension now getting long term problems (like inequalities) addressed when the politicians (local and central) are there for a short term and want short term outcomes.

Devolution within the Sectors

To date:

- Decentralisation to date has been uneven across the sectors – eg. education is theoretically being decentralised but practically is NOT.... leaving education out of it is a big problem. Education is a key factor for a healthy region. Thus there needs to be collaboration that joins the dots across sectors - especially education within the broader social sector
- Impacts have been tricky in mental health as there are two aspects of mental health: the physical and the social. The devolution of the physical has happened, but not the social. The step-by-step approach is not working. There are major headaches involved with the lining up of WINZ, Housing NZ etc. But the fact that there is now a sense of social movement going on within the mental health sector that wasn't there before is positive – there's more now happening successfully now from the bottom up too – so things have changed

- Tertiary education providers have been encouraged to work collaboratively to avoid duplication, but there is a concern that they are slowly losing that collaboration due to competition – the fact that there is no shared LOCAL vision for tertiary education is a really limiting factor. National policy agendas/visions also need to be translated at the local level so people buy in/understand what it is they are collectively working towards...otherwise all the smaller organisations will just die away, and the larger ones just getting larger.

The future:

- Hard to make blanket generalisations about which sectors will run faster than others in terms of decentralisation - territorial and local government agencies in good position along with health and social development sectors
- Important that stakeholders should have a mandate to validate the decentralisation process within sectors. Key for people to know what's going on/how things will happen/what resources will follow etc and have an input into this before it happens. Also helps promote shared ownership and assists in implementation/roll out of decentralisation
- Ministry of Social Development has done well getting changes for community organisations. Likely that they will move faster in terms of decentralisation than some other sectors/ministries.
- Health sector also in a good position. Possible because of the ground work that has been done over the last 15 years. A history in the 1980s and 1990s of a strong and focused community sector, so when the opportunity arose there was a foundation for more meaningful local input/influence/control. Waitakere Health Link was really in place before national policy changes told DHBs to forge closer links with their communities.
- So, maybe it is not about sectors being ready but about where needs/strengths are in the community?????
 - A real need to acknowledge the geographic differences in communities and their available infrastructure
 - About lining up levels of community and government also ie. community, community sector, city council, regional council and central government
 - often it's one of the players above within the sector who takes lead role for certain functions/projects/aspects eg. Waitakere Ranges Protection Project – Waitakere City Council paying for consultation and pulling together information/research held by community sector and central/local government.
 - Strategic brokers with clearly defined roles and functions are important in the decentralisation planning and implementation process – those sectors and communities that have these people in place will be in stronger positions
- At local, regional and national levels need to look at issues of resource allocation and political processes. Looking at the community level first, at the democratic process and how decisions are made and ensuring a community voice, then at regional level and then at the national level
- It's also necessary to know the roles and functions of the sectors (and the levels within it) that are decentralising. If politicians and operational staff are not aligned then decentralisation will not be effective. It's important that the political and bureaucratic wings work together/understand what each other's doing more than ever.

Being Political AND Collaborative

- Tension between being political and collaborative isn't a new one, nor is a major problem. At the local level there has been and will always need to be activism and as long as people/players/stakeholders understand each other's roles then it's fine. The other important factor is having a shared vision – that way, everyone understands where you're trying to head and what you're trying to achieve. Until you collaborate you can't effectively advocate.
- Fact that the centre fluctuates between left and right, and agencies have to switch to new ideologies, jargon, way of talking about things is a reality. Agencies have to understand the way the new government things, how it operates – this also takes time.
- It's necessary to develop political skills to deal with politicians and “the system” – it is about game playing and knowing how to play the game and who to play it with – takes time and perseverance

Decentralisation and Impacts on Maori Community

Ensuring treaty responsibilities are also devolved and according to best practice

- A lot of Maori do not want things decentralised. The Treaty relationship is between Maori and the Crown, that is central government. There are examples where Maori did not benefit from decentralised bodies.
- There are various understandings of the Treaty and this creates a problem with how to measure the effects of decentralisation. Decentralisation could be a threat for Maori and therefore many Maori would like to maintain the status quo with the government having responsibility
- Education and partnership is needed. We need an understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and how it can be implemented. The community hasn't learnt about it, thus there is a need for education.
- Education about the Treaty and how to implement the principles/obligations it establishes is needed both with centralisation and decentralisation
- Education needs to come from central government and local iwi, that is, from the bottom-up. Issue for community is often one of money
- School system needs to do more to support Treaty knowledge. Tomorrow's Schools is one attempt to address this. Other examples are the National Administration Guidelines and the National Education Guidelines. There are Treaty provisions here but things are still not progressing, why not?
- Is it better for local councils to be involved in the education of the Treaty in schools? Acknowledgement that these models already exist elsewhere. And that in terms of the “Waitakere Way” we are an unusual council. Other Councils are scared of the Treaty
- Collaboration at a local level needs to be combined with community understanding. You need to get everyone behind you, including councils and community.
- The Treaty is a problem for central government. That is what is driving decentralisation.
- The foreshore agreement is an excellent example of devolution and there are positive and negative aspects to this.
- Some of the “glue” that helps make things work are processes which support relationships. Also tolerance, understanding and listening

Making sure an array of Maori organisations (not just the big ones) are considered and involved in planning of devolved services and ensuring that governance, planning and implementation processes are secured in a “for Maori, by Maori” way

- With regard to more local control, you can decentralise but then will you be dealing with knowledgeable people or militants?
- Maori want to control their own affairs because this has been shown to be more effective. Effective work by Maori for Maori has been proven but this is not across the board ie. separate government structures.
- Agreements between various organisations can help secure more commitment and certainty for Maori
- Reality that Maori input is affected by political changes and cycles. It is a matter of educating the people. Sometimes you need to physically drag grassroots people into the process.
- Many problem stories on the ground, particularly around issues facing kids in schools. These are everyone’s problems. We need a voice at the local level. Need more local information that’s based closer to the ground – helps in the education process
- Is there too much emphasis on the bureaucratic side rather than delivery? YES
- Maori are risk takers, however they are currently focused on a centralised nation state. Thus, the question of decentralisation poses a threat to Maori, more than a promise.
- To improve democracy there needs to be a legislative system to back things up. We may need to consider changing the voting system. This requires legislative change to recognise the vote for Maori people. There needs to be delegated powers. If you want Maori community as part of local government they will need to be put in through a different method.

Plenary Session on Partnerships

What we haven’t talked about...

New ideas

Key concerns

Ideas on next steps for discussion

- We have talked about leadership as if it isn’t a resource. In my mind leadership is a real resource. Once you have the leadership cash will follow.
- Volunteers need to be considered. Partnership is a huge sacrifice for them. There is no way to get funding for volunteers. There is a double cost for volunteers, they sacrifice knowledge and time (thus paid work opportunities). Involvement in decentralisation is a real cost to the community sector. Fear that we have not captured the value-added service volunteers provide and how we keep this sustainable to take the next generation forward, from today’s leaders? Request for the research project to take a look at resourcing – maybe there’s a need for a further workshop??
- How can we grow leadership and capacity? By recognising them, by asking people on the street who they think are the leaders and why. We need to know more about leadership and how to support it.
- Leadership can be as simple as inspiring people and then getting out of the way to let people do things

- The concept of direction is usually missing. I am interested in the political process and how leadership is bestowed through votes. There is no political voice for Maori and Pacific people in local government. So how do we get this at a community level? Collaboration is critical for us, we don't have a voice any other way. We (Maori and Pacific people) will always be in the minority, thus we will never get elected alone.
 - The mentoring process is really valuable for volunteers and community workers. In the Ranui Action Project we've created a tiered structure and this grows leadership.
 - The three strategies for next steps in Waitakere put forward in the background discussion paper are not mutually exclusive. Each has limits, to be effective we need to be taking action in each of the three areas.
 - The Ministry of Social Development has considered similar issues in recent years. Dorothy Wilson conducted research when looking at the Community and Voluntary Sector and its relationship with central government and a number of workshops were held locally and nationally. There must be useful information or guidelines from this work that we can draw on. What comes out of these processes? How can we keep building on each other's learnings???
- Megan: yes we can continue to follow up on that work as many of the same issues were raised. Interesting that Dorothy put a challenge to us at our first partnerships workshop to keep trying to find solutions locally. Reflects that reality that Government alone is not going to solve things and that it's communities like Waitakere who have lots of experience, ideas and leadership where lots more change will continue to be led from
- Another strategy for us to consider is creative destruction. Building something by breaking something.

Closing Comments

- A big thank you from the project team to all who have participated in the workshops.
 - There's a huge heart in Waitakere and we really appreciate people's time and willingness to engage with the research project.
 - Will work over next couple of months to prepare a report on partnership issues next steps for Waitakere.
 - Hope to co-host another workshop next year with Wellbeing Collaboration Project that looks at social inequalities and poverty and potential local collaborative responses. Socio-economic outcomes that result from partnership approach is a key focus for year three of the research project.
 - Look forward to ongoing dialogue on collaboration and partnership over next year – a Maori Community Hui on partnerships will be held on Tuesday December 9th at Waitakere City Council from 6-9pm...an open invitation for all to attend.
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Participants

Mike Loveman - Supporting Families in Mental Illness (prev. Schizophrenia Fellowship)
Margaret Stewart - Community Education, Rutherford College
Bevis England - Waitakere Eco Tech Action
Peta Si'ulepa - Health promoting schools
Warren Lindberg - Auckland Regional Public Health Service
Gary Sutcliffe - Waitakere Health Link/ Shared Vision for Mental Health/ Walsh Trust
Brenda Brady - Waitakere City Councillor
Des Heke - Waitakere City Council;
Basil Leo - Pacific Island Advisory Board;
Annette Fenton - Waitakere City Councillor;
Dorothy McGray - Waitakere W.E.A.
Linda Dunbar – Ranui Action Project
Diane Jennings – Ranui Action Project
Grant Power – Community Employment Group
Kevin Healy – Waitakere Community Board
Leanne Catchpole – Waitemata District Health Board
Tony Rea – Waitakere City Council
Rachel Skudder – BEST Training
Kim Penetito – Department of Internal Affairs
Mihi Te Huia - Community representative
Warahi Paki - Waitakere City Council

Cr Brenda Brady - Waitakere City Council Children and Youth Advocate
Josie O'Dwyer – Private training representative for Waitakere Education Sector Trust
Cathy Kenkel - Waitakere City Council
Christine Smith – Health West
Wendy Larner – Auckland University