



**Submission to
Auckland Council Annual Plan 2011/2012
from
Community Waitakere**

1 April 2011

Community Waitakere Submission to the Auckland Council's Draft Annual Plan 2011/2012

Introduction

Community Waitakere is a Charitable Trust, dedicated to achieving our vision of a sustainable Waitakere with strong, connected communities. We have a thirty year history of supporting and strengthening community organisations, building and maintaining relationships with central and local government and communities, undertaking and supporting community development initiatives and fostering collaborative actions that achieve our vision.

The values that we hold are:

- Acting with integrity
- Growing sustainability
- Inspiring
- Partnering
- Inclusion

Community Waitakere is recognised nationally as a key linkage between national, regional and local networks. We provide the “glue” which joins diverse community organisations with each other and with local and central government agencies and funders. This function enables the sharing of resources, knowledge and networks across a broad sector.

Our submission acknowledges the commitment demonstrated by our partners at Auckland Council (and previously Waitakere City Council) in developing collaboration and partnering with our communities and citizens. There are many examples of successful initiatives which have emerged through this way of working (now recognised and commonly referred to across Auckland as the “Waitakere Way”), which unites council and the people they represent in a participatory democratic process. The Waitakere Wellbeing Collaboration Project and the internationally acclaimed Project Twin Streams are fine examples of such initiatives.

Collaborative partnerships between community, local and central government built over three decades have contributed to local authority decision-making in Waitakere being focussed, clear, transparent and accountable. We have years of experience in this effective way of working and believe that despite the now more complex co-governance arrangements, the spirit and will of Waitakere remain strong and determined. This was clearly demonstrated at the West Communities Summit on March 30th 2011.

Over the past two years in particular, Community Waitakere has responded to the governance changes by becoming proactive in co leading regional responses as well as local. This has included formation of the Community Coalition for Auckland (CC4A) and co-founding the Auckland Community Development Alliance (ACDA). We are increasingly being called upon by Council and Communities to act as consultants, at both regional and local levels. We have begun to enable communities and our three

Local Boards to connect through facilitated workshop sessions such as the Community Chief Executives' Roundtable workshop in December and the West Communities Summit in March 2011, which we co-hosted with Auckland Council.

Our unique position as a local based convening organisation is essential to ensure that regional activities are grounded in solid community experience and our communities remain safe, prosperous, resilient places to live, where people have a sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods and take pride in their region.

Community Waitakere wishes to speak to our submission at any public hearing.

Community Waitakere submits:

1. COMMUNITY (Volume 1, Part II: Activities & Services, pg 41)
 - 1.1 Community Waitakere commends Council for its adherence to the concepts of strong communities as a central strategic priority. We consider however that the introductory statement in the Community Section is too narrow.
 - 1.2 Strong communities also play key roles in economic development, the environment and especially governance in its broadest terms.
 - 1.3 The strategic alignments of community services should include thriving Economy, to take account of the growing awareness and practice of local, community economic development and social enterprise.
 - 1.4 If Council is to assist in transforming Auckland, it should be introducing, promoting and resourcing more involvement of communities in those activities, which have dual economic and social outcomes.
 - 1.5 Community Waitakere, as a long standing, well networked community development organisation, stands ready to partner with Council to carry forward the strategies needed to build the most liveable city in the world, subject only to the recognition that increased resourcing is required to meet the new challenges.
 - 1.6 We are positioned to complement and give effect to the new Auckland Council structure to collaborate and partner with organisations at a regional level (through ACDA) and at a local level through Community Waitakere.
 - 1.7 Community Waitakere can assist Auckland Council in the transition utilising our relationships between governance bodies, local councillors, local boards, and community, and we can be a conduit between governing bodies down to local boards.

- 1.8 We believe that Auckland Council should be making the most of resources that have already been developed in Waitakere in consultation with community such as the Social Strategy and the Partnering Policy.
- 1.9 Community Waitakere **recommends** that the role of Community Waitakere as a lead local community development organisation with regional connections continue to be recognised and acknowledged.
- 1.10 Community Waitakere **recommends** that Community Waitakere be adequately resourced to work in partnership within the new governance arrangements to achieve the community development expectations

Explanation: Community Waitakere's role has become considerably more complicated and central to Council's relationships with Communities under the new regional and local governance system. Community Waitakere has been active at local level in Waitakere for many years, latterly under the terms of a Partnering Agreement with Waitakere City Council (**attached**).

- 1.11 Over the last two years in particular, we have responded to the governance changes by becoming pro active in co leading regional responses as well as local. This has included co-founding the Auckland Community Development Alliance (ACDA), which has, amongst other actions, organised the Regional Communities Summit in December 2010 in conjunction with Council.
- 1.12 ACDA was invited to nominate members to the Social Policy Forum, and Community Waitakere provided the ACDA speaker for the Communities section of 'Auckland Unleashed.'
- 1.13 Community Waitakere supports the submission made by ACDA that Auckland Council adopt the Auckland Community Development Charter as the initial framework for its relationships with Auckland's diverse communities, and that council provide funding for the further development of the Auckland Community Development Alliance.

Explanation: The Charter (**attached**) was developed by Auckland Community Development Alliance, and signed up to by Mayor Brown, Deputy Mayor Hulse and several other Councillors, in 2010. As a working document, it provides an ideal set of guidelines, values and principles for the critical relationships as they are developing over time. The commitments sought in the Charter promote recognition that resilient communities, participating fully in planning and implementing services and programmes, are the basis of a thriving city.

- 1.14 We support ongoing funding being provided to the Alliance because strong community convening organisations are required at Regional and local levels equally. ACDA provides the regional vehicle for community led development, connecting with strong local organisations like Community Waitakere to translate that to community engagement at the local level.
- 1.15 Community Waitakere has played a central role in ADCA, whilst at the same time, continuing to build the capacity of local groups, and keeping them informed of the rapid development, through Open Door Days and the Waitakere Chief Executives Roundtable.

1.16 We are also already playing key roles in exercises such as the Auckland Plan Summits, and being called upon increasingly to act as consultants, at both regional and local level. Our unique position as a local based convening organisation is essential to ensure that regional activities are grounded in solid community experience.

1.17 The costs of operating in the new environment were never factored in to the reforms. These are escalating as we work regionally with increased time and travel alone now a significant, unfunded cost, and widening expectations being expressed by Council and communities alike. A proposal **(attached)** has been made to Auckland Council support these additional costs for 2011-2012. If significant extra funding is not provided, Community Waitakere's own future will be at risk. It is our intent to be working together with Auckland Council to develop a partnering agreement for 2012-2015.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Volume 2, Vision, strategies and activities, pg 85)

2.1 Community Waitakere **recommends** that Council include a specific commitment to strategies and funding for supporting local Community Economic Development and Social Enterprise within its Economic Development Strategy

Explanation: Community Economic development is a well recognised field in other western countries, especially the UK, and is now emerging in New Zealand. Community Waitakere is organising the second **NZ Community Economic Development Conference** in April. Council could be highly instrumental in advancing it, by such means as transfer of community asset management to local communities. Community Waitakere is also developing a Social Enterprise Hub which could model innovative projects aimed at building local employment and independence from grant funding.

We appreciate the opportunity to make this submission.

Pat Watson

Manager

Community Waitakere

Tony Mayow

Chair

Community Waitakere

Attachments:

1. Partnering Agreement
2. ACDA Charter
3. Proposal to Auckland Council