



CONFIDENTIAL

**Submission to
Waitakere City Council Annual Plan 2009/10
from
Community Waitakere**

1 May 2009

Community Waitakere Submission to the Waitakere City Council's Annual Plan 2009/2010

With only four months of 2009 gone by, it has already been a big year for Community Waitakere. The uncertain economic environment, Auckland's Regional Governance process, the increasing demand for advocacy and support of local initiatives, we have certainly had no time to sit on any laurels. However amongst this whirlwind many recent achievements have been attained by Community Waitakere that we wish to acknowledge. These include;

- The rapid response and action on behalf of the many concerned voices raised by individuals and organisations about the proposed Regional Governance structure and the manner in which this has been 'rolled out'. Action has included website formation, email and letter writing campaigns, protest rally organisation, regional network connections and consultation with Members of Parliament.
- Numerous workshops and forums, such as Simpler Funding Waitakere, NGO Community Sector Wellbeing Planning, the NZCOSS National Conference, Transition Towns Hosting and many short courses specifically for community organisations.
- Project Twin Streams project development and future governance research and strengthening of existing partnerships within this.
- Supporting local initiatives such as the Ranui Action Plan, Hobsonville Land Company Community Nurseries and the Greenstreets Project.
- Events co-hosting including the Fathers Day Out, Toddlers Day Out and Growing our Garden. Further regular events are planned to foster organisational networks across the community and business sectors.

Community Waitakere's priorities over 2009/2010 include:

- ♦ Continuing 'business as usual' while making the most of the opportunities emerging during this transition time, both locally and regionally.
- ♦ Building our connections with the local community and voluntary sector, our own 'grass roots', and working collaboratively to support and strengthen this sector throughout the recession.

- ♦ Working collaboratively and advocating on regional governance issues to get the best possible deal for Waitakere City communities.
- ♦ Working to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability and organisational health of Community Waitakere. One part of this will involve exploring how to secure long term core funding for Community Waitakere.

Community Waitakere submits:

1. That Council be congratulated for its commitment to the Partnering Agreement with our organisation to build a sustainable Waitakere with thriving, connected communities.
2. That in recognition of the changing local government environment and the current recession, Council and Community Waitakere work closely during 2009/2010 as part of this Partnering Agreement to:
 - a) Identify the implications of the adopted new arrangements for the community and voluntary sector, and for local communities in Waitakere City.
 - b) Identify and capitalise on opportunities to strengthen the local community and voluntary sector and support Council's Social Strategy, Economic Wellbeing and Cultural Strategy goals within the existing local body arrangements.
 - c) Work to ensure the best possible practical outcomes for the community and voluntary sector and local communities from the new arrangements.
 - d) Identify how to support local voices and involvement in the transition to new local governance arrangements.
 - e) Identify and implement effective intersectoral measures to mitigate the effects of the international recession on Waitakere's communities and economy.
3. Community Waitakere's roles, focus and profile in Waitakere City and regionally have grown rapidly over the last twelve months. To capitalise on the significant gains made and in light of the fast changing context, Community Waitakere seeks a further \$53,000 during 2009/2010 for the following (with indicative amounts for each project given):
 - a) To continue to coordinate and support community mobilising and active engagement with issues associated with the new local governance arrangements (\$15,000). This is likely to include running a series of community hui to talk through opportunities, options and actions to support social wellbeing in Waitakere City.
 - b) To promote the 'Waitakere Way' in the region and play a leadership role in developing a regional forum/voice for social wellbeing issues (\$3,000).

- c) To run workshops and develop effective processes to support greater self determination and financial sustainability for social and community organisations in Waitakere City, through for example social enterprise training, identifying opportunities for community ownership of assets, community provision of contracted services and community consultancy development (\$15,000).
 - d) To play a lead role in coordinating the community process on future governance for Project Twin Streams (\$10,000).
 - e) To play a facilitative role in bringing together a full range of sector groups, including business, social services, and other community organisations, and to research and develop a coordinated, intersectoral approach to the challenges thrown up by the current recession (\$10,000).
4. That Council and Community Waitakere continue to work closely together during 2009/2010 to undertake joint projects and pick up on new opportunities that may arise, including seeking to embed community led and neighbourhood development and the transfer of appropriate activities, such as Waitakere On-line.

Commentary on submissions

1. Partnership Agreement

The agreement signed between Community Waitakere (CW) and Council in 2006 was a breakthrough for local government and community relationships, and is commonly cited as an example of best practice nationally. The partnership principles on which it is based provide a model for increasing effectiveness in multi agency collaboration. The agreement recognises that the two parties depend on each other to achieve the jointly agreed goals and work programme. During 2008/2009 this partnership has continued to deepen, with high levels of trust and respect in existence. The local governance changes have highlighted the extent to which our two organisations can join together productively in times of need.

2. Focusing on the best deal from the new governance arrangements

The events and advocacy emerging out of the Minister of Local Government's proposals for Auckland's local and regional governance have affirmed the huge strength of the 'Westie' spirit and ability to join together and fight for what we believe in. Recent times have also deepened the connection between Council and Community Waitakere and shown how a local community can get behind its Council and vice versa. Community Waitakere considers the coming year to be critical to work together with Council and communities to get the best possible scenario for our people and environment out of the new arrangements.

We consider it to be vital to continue the close working relationship with Council to this end.

3. Making the most of this pivotal year

This pre-amalgamation time will not come again and the next year will be crucial in terms of seeking the maximum gains possible for our communities and our beloved Waitakere. This takes time and resources, and Community Waitakere considers that to do justice to the coordination, advocacy, facilitation and leadership roles required during this time that additional resources will be needed. These are described as follows, keeping in mind that times are changing fast and new opportunities will arise over the year.

3a) Community advocacy and mobilising

The Waitakere community has shown its disdain for many of the proposals currently being promoted around local and regional governance. Funding is sought to continue to coordinate efforts to ensure community voices and views are known and in the media. Also, once final decisions are made there will be a need to work with local communities to identify implications and opportunities arising. This funding will pay for media space, running community hui, documenting the process through video and photography and specialist expertise and advice.

3b) Promoting the 'Waitakere Way' and regional social sustainability

The 'Waitakere Way' is regionally and nationally renowned in terms of collaboration and partnering, taking holistic approaches through making connections between issues, promoting sustainability and the 'Eco City' and supporting community and neighbourhood led development. Community Waitakere wishes to promote this expertise and experience regionally and ensure that its key aspects are picked up within the new governance arrangements. Also, in our submission to the Royal Commission, Community Waitakere advocated for a regional forum and body for social issues, to sit alongside those advocating for business interests. This was accepted in the Royal Commission report but subsequently removed. Community Waitakere would like to play a lead role in seeking to both promote the Waitakere Way regionally and to resurrect a strong regional voice for social sustainability. This will require resources in terms of Manager, staff and Board time, hosting regional forums to this end and communications materials.

3c) A more sustainable local community sector

The community and voluntary sector nationally and locally is undergoing major change, both due to the recession, regional governance changes, drying up of funding sources and higher social and community needs. We need to make some big shifts in terms of attitudes and approach, to a new way of operating that is more self determining, independent and self sufficient and less dependent on government and philanthropic funding. Community Waitakere sees the urgent need to spearhead local community economic development, social enterprise

and self funding initiatives for the community sector, and to support regional moves around this. This requires funding to identify opportunities and expertise to run workshops/training and mentor community organisations. What we are seeking to catalyse is a paradigm shift in the sector towards doing it for ourselves, including seeking local community ownership of public assets, picking up contracts for services locally and working with local business in mutually beneficial ways. This is a further area in which Waitakere can show national leadership.

3d) Future governance of Project Twin Streams

Safeguarding the nationally significant work of Project Twin Streams, including its community development approach is the focus of the current future governance work taking place. While a community process is currently underway to identify options for community involvement in future governance, ongoing work will be required to coordinate community input and fund community representation in this ongoing process. Community Waitakere is currently playing a coordination role in bringing together community views and ideas, and wishes to continue to play this role in 2009/2010. Funding is needed for specialist expertise to support this process (i.e. a facilitator), for hosting community gatherings and doing further in-depth work on potential models.

3e) Jointly responding to the recession

The current times call for innovative, joined up responses. Good research and strong leadership is also required to develop appropriate community responses to these recession times and the challenges that lie ahead for our communities and local organisations, from business, to faith groups, not for profit social services and government. Community Waitakere wishes to continue and expand the leadership role it has been playing this year in understanding and responding to the recession. This funding would be for practical research into opportunities, think tanks and action tanks, facilitation, expert advice, communications and resourcing the input of those who would not otherwise be able to participate in finding innovative responses to challenging times.

4. Picking up new opportunities

Council is undertaking its own processes to consider how to continue key social wellbeing initiatives such as the Wellbeing Collaboration work and continuing its unique community and neighbourhood led projects such as Massey Matters. Community Waitakere will continue to work closely with Council to identify opportunities to preserve this work over time.

Background

Community Waitakere was established (as WADCOSS) in 1983 as the umbrella organisation for the community and voluntary sector organisations in Waitakere City. The change of name was formally

agreed to at the 2006 AGM; a new Trust Deed was approved at the 2007 AGM and in 2008 Community Waitakere completed the transition from an Incorporated Society to a Charitable Trust.

Community Waitakere is a community development foundation committed to achieving a vision of a strong, dynamic, sustainable third sector in Waitakere City. We seek to actively uphold principles of partnership, sustainability and community-led development in all our undertakings.

Community Waitakere values the partnering agreement between Waitakere City Council and Community, which recognises our organisation as one of the Council's key strategic partners.

Future Direction

Our 2009-2012 strategic plan seeks to advance a revitalised organisation through building our capacity and developing organisational strengths through a high-calibre board, management and staff. We take a proactive approach to challenges, both internally and externally, and are innovative in identifying and harnessing new opportunities. In particular we seek to match and link opportunities towards forging sustainable communities.

We have identified three key priorities which underpin all of our activities:

- ♦ make a positive difference
- ♦ strengthen our people
- ♦ foster organisational sustainability

We appreciate the opportunity to make this submission.

Pat Watson

Manager

Community Waitakere

Tony Mayow

Chair

Community Waitakere