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Community Development Framework for delivering Strong and Healthy Communities strategy

1.0 Introduction

To be vibrant, dynamic and active, a city requires not just economic capital but social capital. Social capital refers to the capacity of people in society to come together voluntarily to create a community and to address concerns in their communities. Auckland City Council has a specific role in community development, working with community groups, government agencies and residents.

The purpose of this framework is to state how the council aims to work with others in the area of community development. An increasingly diverse and sophisticated population presents a challenge to council to keep up to date in how it provides public facilities and services in communities.

The framework focuses council's day-to-day activities to deliver community development objectives from council's Strong and Healthy Communities strategy. Key stakeholders have worked with council to develop these objectives. They also take into account research into social and demographic trends affecting Auckland's communities.

The development of the framework has resulted in:

- priority actions identified within council's community development function for the next three years
- ways that council will work that will increase our effectiveness.

2.0 The context

Some of the key characteristics of Auckland city and its communities include:

- a city that wins international awards for its lifestyle
- relatively easy access for all people to plentiful parks, beaches and recreational choices
- a strong network of community centres, halls and activities
- a city form based on "villages" with town centres at their hearts, making it easy for people to identify with their neighbourhood
- a concentration of population in the age group from 30-50 years, often new to the city and involved in bringing up families
- an increasing proportion of residents born outside of New Zealand
- a growing population, with the Auckland city's isthmus population expected to grow by 60,000 people over the next decade
- significant areas of disadvantage within some areas of the city
- more lifestyle-related health issues, such as diabetes, asthma and coronary heart disease, particularly among Maori and Pacific communities.

2.1 Community development at Auckland City Council

Many of Auckland City Council's activities contribute to Auckland's sense of community. Libraries, community centres, halls, and recreation facilities all provide venues and activities that bring communities together and promote healthy living.

All council activity within the area of community development falls under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA2002) legislation. The LGA2002 details the purposes for local government, which include "to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future".

2.2 Why is Auckland City Council involved in community development?

Cities are complex places. Individual agencies cannot on their own deliver the best results. In many countries, including Australia and New Zealand, there has been an increasing trend towards government working in partnership with councils, non-government agencies, community groups and the private sector.

Local government is in a good position to know and understand their communities, and play a coordination and leadership role.

The council's Strong and Healthy Communities strategy has the objectives of:

- fostering connected communities
- fostering a sense of pride and belonging
- making places for people
- supporting safe communities
- supporting healthy communities.

The council will undertake its community development function through many roles:

- setting direction
- advocating on behalf of the community
- working as a partner/broker with others
- providing advice and information
- building skills and capability
- providing funding
- providing services
- providing facilities
- using regulation.

If the council does this effectively, our facilities will become popular and well used and our staff will be valued.

3.0 Key priorities and actions

3.1 Strategic objective: Foster connected communities

3.1.1 Priority:

Encourage and motivate residents to take responsibility for and pride in the appearance and safety of their neighbourhoods

Role:

- Working as a partner/broker with others – employ community advisers to work with residents in local neighbourhoods, targeting those areas most in need
- Building skills and capability – support and strengthen skills of residents to address their local concerns
- Providing advice and information – employ community advisers to connect people and groups to agencies and others that can help
- Providing services – provision of the council customer contact centre to give information, advice and respond to requests for service.

3.1.2 Priority:

Support networking, partnerships and joint programmes between council, schools, churches, government agencies and community groups

Role:

- Working as a partner/broker with others – provide opportunities for council, government agencies and community groups to get together on common issues.

3.1.3 Priority:

Grow the skills and participation levels of the community in volunteer work

Role:

- Providing facilities – provide no or low-cost leases for valued community and recreation groups on council land
- Building skills and capability – help volunteers in community groups through training and joint projects, and involving volunteers in the care and operation of our facilities, parks and streets in their neighbourhoods
- Providing funding – administer a community assistance programme that provides funding/resources to community groups
- Providing advice and information – employ community advisers to connect people and groups to agencies and others that can help.

3.1.4 Actions for the next three years:

1. Complete annual action plans that outline what council and other agencies will do, including commitment from council to:

- deliver effective citywide programmes
- ensure the delivery of community service meets the needs of local communities and communities of interest
- build the parks volunteering programme
- create new volunteering programmes in streets (litter, safety, graffiti, berm mowing)
- provide training courses for community groups on meetings management, financial and staff management, strategic planning, fundraising.

2. Complete the review of community assistance schemes and implement the new policy

3. Continue the asset development programme to make changes to facilities to improve disabled access
4. Know and understand our communities through annually reviewed social profiling, and use this research to shape the neighbourhood action plans to suit areas.

3.2 Strategic objective: Foster a sense of pride and belonging

3.2.1 Priority:

Provide opportunities for communities and neighbourhoods to meet informally together for celebration, social and recreational events

Role:

- Providing services – deliver a programme of local community events and provide affordable access to halls for community and family events
- Working as a partner/broker with others – assist people to organise street and neighbourhood parties.

3.2.2 Priority:

Provide effective responses for clean, tidy and well cared for public places

Role:

- Providing services – provide street cleaning (through appropriate contracts) including street orderlies in town centres
- Working as a partner/broker with others – build the number of volunteers who help council to care for public assets, including town centre retailers improving their management of waste and shop frontages.

3.2.3 Actions for the next three years:

1. Include in each neighbourhood action plan the programmed events and celebrations for each local area including street parties and the annual events programme
2. Continue to manage cleaning and berm mowing contracts effectively including street orderlies and the waste doctor programme
3. Develop volunteer programmes to support the care of streets, parks and town centres.

3.3 Strategic objective: Make places for people

3.3.1 Priority:

Enhance facilities and town centres to become accessible and welcoming community hubs.

Role:

- Providing facilities – have a network of community centres, halls and libraries across the city and a town square in every town centre
- Working as a partner/broker with others – work with others to gain public use of other facilities e.g. churches, schools, halls brokerage initiative and where possible support community management of council's community centres
- Providing services – programme and/or fund events for community participation and those that provide opportunities for people to take part in lifelong learning.

3.3.2 Actions for the next three years:

1. Include in each neighbourhood action plan the programmed events/activities for lifelong learning in church and school facilities and council's libraries and community centres
2. Complete the facilities review and implement the findings over time
3. Deliver the asset management plans annual programme of works (to be listed in neighbourhood action plans) that deliver on the town centre squares and sufficient facilities for a comprehensive network over time and non-asset solutions e.g. use of facilities owned by others
4. Continue to support community management of community centres where practical.

3.4 Strategic objective: Support safe communities

3.4.1 Priority:

Remove graffiti and prosecute graffiti vandals

Role:

- Providing services – contract for the removal of graffiti and for site surveillance to catch and prosecute offenders
- Working as a partner/broker with others – work with volunteers, businesses and transport agencies to promote removal of graffiti on private and government buildings and invest in graffiti prevention activities.

3.4.2 Priority:

Design features in public areas and facilities to minimise crime

Role:

- Advocating on behalf of the community – including CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) requirement in all design of new buildings and public places for council and private projects.

3.4.3 Actions for next three years:

1. Continue with a zero tolerance graffiti policy
2. Continue to manage graffiti removal and surveillance contracts effectively
3. Prosecute graffiti vandals
4. Work with Transport NZ and On-track to improve graffiti management in rail and state highway corridors
5. Work with volunteers and businesses to encourage the community to take responsibility for removing and preventing graffiti
6. Continue to require CPTED assessment of all new council parks and facilities development
7. Include the requirement of a CPTED analysis in the district plan for all new developments.

3.5 Strategic objective: Support healthy communities

3.5.1 Priority:

Partner to provide programmes that promote physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices

Role:

- Working as a partner/broker with others – work with community and government agencies to fund and/or deliver recreation and sports events for general participation (e.g. SPARC, YMCA, Sport Auckland)
- Providing facilities – have a network of recreation centres, swimming pools and parks across the city.

3.5.2 Priority:

Use council regulation to minimise harm from gambling, alcohol and vice, and to protect public health

Role:

- Using regulation – enforce council policy on gambling and alcohol bans
- Working as a partner/broker with others – work with the Police and food/entertainment industry to ensure responsible practices within the industry.

3.5.3 Actions for next three years:

1. Review and implement new policies and bylaws on gambling, alcohol and adult entertainment
2. Continue to partner with SPARC and Sport Auckland on Active Auckland programmes
3. Work with the volunteer recreation and sports sector to build skill and capability.

4.0 Ways of working

Council has reviewed its ways of working and developed a process to achieve its community development priority areas.

1. Base what we do on sound information

Council will use research to identify areas of need and guide how council uses its resources in community development.

2. Deliver policy promises on the ground

We will do what we say we will as stated in our neighbourhood action plans.

3. Build skills and capability of individuals and communities

We will work alongside, strengthening and building the skills and capability of community groups and volunteers, and providing opportunities for people to go on learning all their lives.

4. Work alongside other agencies

We will develop working relationships with government agencies, community groups and the private sector to achieve our community development objectives.

5. Advocate that other agencies use their resources wisely

We will work to encourage others to invest their resources in needed community development.

6. Allocate resources to match local needs and character

We will work in teams based on five areas of the city (a neighbourhood approach) delivering programmes appropriately for each area.

7. Review and check what we do to make sure it works

Community development activity will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

5.0 Review process

The Community Development Framework will be refreshed annually and reviewed every three years.