Promoting Community Well-being

A Study of the Involvement of
Councils of Social Services In Local Authority Community
Outcomes Processes

Karen **Johnston**
Christine **Cheyne**
Wendy **Parker**

August 2005
A Report Commissioned by

NZCOSS
NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICES
te kaunihera ratonga tauwhiro o aotearoa

NZCOSS would like to acknowledge

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Acknowledgements

When the stranger says: what is the meaning of this city?

Do you huddle together because you love each other?

What will you answer?

'We all dwell together to make money from each other'?
or 'This is a community'?
      (T.S. Eliot, *The chorus of the rocks*)

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Abbreviations

ACOSS	**Alexandra Council of Social Services**
CCOSS	**Christchurch Council of Social Services**
CD	**Community Development**
CDU	**Community Development Unit**
CE	**Chief Executive**
CODC	**Central Otago District Council**
COGS	**Community Organisation Grants Scheme**
COP	**Community Outcomes Process**
COSS	**Council(s) of Social Services[1]**
CYF	**Department of Child, Youth and Family Services**
DHB	**District Health Board**
DIA	**Department of Internal Affairs**
GDC	**Gisborne District Council**
GISCOSS	**Gisborne and East Coast Council of Social Services**
LGNZ	**Local Government New Zealand**
LTCCP	**Long Term Council Community Plan**
MDC	**Manawatu District Council**
MSD	**Ministry of Social Development**
NGO	**Non-government organisation**
n.p.	**no page**
NSCSS	**North Shore Community and Social Services**
NZCOSS	**New Zealand Council of Social Services**
REAP	**Rural Education and Activities Programme**
SINCOSS	**Social Issues Network Council of Social Services**
SWDC	**South Waikato District Council**
TCOSS	**Tokoroa Council of Social Services**

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[1] The term Councils of Social Services is not used by all of the local members of the New Zealand Council of Social Services. However, for the purposes of this report, we have used the term generically to refer both to those that use the term Council of Social Services and similar local social service networks.

Executive Summary

The Local Government Act 2002 introduced a requirement for local authorities to conduct a Community Outcomes Process (COP) and to adopt a Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). This planning process provides an important opportunity for NZCOSS to facilitate closer relationships between local COSS and local government.

This project aimed to develop a snapshot for NZCOSS of how its member organisations are currently involved in the new local authority planning processes since 2003 and how their contribution might be enhanced in the next few years. From the material gathered about current COSS involvement and aspirations, NZCOSS can identify how it might support local COSS to be fully engaged in the development and implementation of Community Outcomes.

Research was carried out between May and August 2005 that examined local Councils of Social Services. The focus was on their functions/activities, operational capacity and networks, strength and development needs, their existing relationships with local government and their involvement in the Community Outcomes Process in their area.

Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered by a survey sent to all 44 local Councils of Social Services (31 responded) and more in-depth case studies of 6 local Councils of Social Services. Together the survey and case studies reveal a diversity of structures and functions across Councils of Social Services. This diversity is reflected in the range of relationships between Councils of Social Services and local authorities throughout New Zealand.

The research shows that Councils of Social Services and equivalent networks of social services organisations play a vital role in assisting local authorities to effectively engage the social sector, to identify priorities for promoting social well-being in the community, and to develop appropriate actions to achieve Community Outcomes. It is vitally important that social services organisations are aware of the importance of this process and are able to participate effectively.

The report makes 6 recommendations relating to the development of linkages and relationships between Councils of Social Services and local and central government and between the New Zealand Council of Social Services and other umbrella groups.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Reason for Research

New Zealand Council of Social Services (NZCOSS) is a national umbrella organisation for local Councils of Social Services (COSS) throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Local COSS typically seek to foster collaborative approaches to social issues in their area. The Local Government Act 2002 introduced a requirement for local authorities to conduct a Community Outcomes Process (COP) and to adopt a Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). This planning process provides an important opportunity for NZCOSS to facilitate closer relationships between local COSS and local government. Many COSS are ideally placed to assist local authorities with the linkages into their communities that they are looking to develop or enhance, while others are still in the development stages, or have yet to develop the capacity to do so. This project aimed to develop a snapshot for NZCOSS of how its member organisations are currently involved in the new local authority planning processes since 2003 and how their contribution might be enhanced in the next few years. From the material gathered about current COSS involvement and aspirations, NZCOSS can identify how it might support local COSS to be fully engaged in the development and implementation of community outcomes.

1.2   Our Brief

The project aimed to 'map' each of the local Councils of Social Services in respect of their functions, capacity and networks, strengths and development needs, and existing relationships with local government. The goal of the Mapping Project is to assist NZCOSS to facilitate closer relationships between local Councils of Social Services and local government so that the local Councils of Social Services are effective participants in the long-term council community planning process. In particular, the Mapping Project set out to:

1. Identify and map all member COSS, including the:
    - Locality/range of COSS
    - Membership of each COSS
    - Governance and management structures
    - Key activities
    - Key relationships
    - Current operational capacity
    - Self-identified strengths, and potential areas for development.

2. Research the extent of each COSS's involvement with local government and in the LTCCP process, and the opportunities for further development.

3. Map this information against the Territorial Local Authority Areas and MSD regions.

4. Prepare national-level material which summarises this information by local government region.

5. Prepare a summary of the areas in which NZCOSS may be able to assist COSS to become better engaged with the LTCCP process, in terms of training, capacity-building and information needs.

1.3   Methodology

In order to gather data on the characteristics of local Councils of Social Services the research included a survey. This provided mainly quantitative data about the broad membership of the New Zealand Council of Social Services. The survey focused on governance, activities, and the general nature of local Councils of Social Services' interactions with local government in their area and, in particular, their involvement in the Community Outcomes Process. Some open-ended questions were included. To complement this quantitative data, and to obtain more detailed information about some local Councils of Social Services' involvement in the Community Outcomes Process which might assist other local Councils of Social Services, case study research focused on the experiences of six member organisations of the New Zealand Council of Social Services.

The survey research involved an electronic questionnaire sent by email to 44 local Councils of Social Services. The questionnaire could be returned electronically (as an email attachment), or printed and returned by post or fax. The case study research involved an interview with a member of the COSS executive (or the local Co-ordinator if available) and a member of the relevant territorial authority[2], and analysis of documents that were publicly available - for example, a submission by the COSS on the draft LTCCP (if it had made one) or other submissions to their local authority[3]; the relevant LTCCP; etc.). Participation in the survey and case study research was voluntary.

In early May 2005, following a peer review process, Massey University's Human Ethics Committee was notified of the research and deemed the research to be of Low Risk. The Committee specified that a statement to this effect was to be used on the Information Sheet and this was included in the covering sheet of the survey questionnaire and also in an Information Sheet given to those who were interviewed for the case study research.

Information about the research was provided by the NZCOSS Co-ordinator to all local Councils of Social Services prior to the distribution of the questionnaire. Information about the research was also circulated via the New Zealand Council of Social Services April/May Newsletter and via a Local Authority Community Development discussion list.

Statistical analysis software was used to collate the survey data and descriptive statistics (frequencies) were generated. Data from the case study research was analysed according to key themes relevant to the Mapping Project, namely organisational structure and operating processes, and current involvement in the COP (overview, positive aspects of COSS involvement, what could be improved), and strengths and development needs of NZCOSS members in relation to their role in the COP. Further details about these two aspects of the data collection strategy are provided in the discussion of each method later in this report.

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[2] The term 'territorial authority' refers to city/district councils (but not regional councils).
[3] Throughout this report the term 'local authority' is generally used to refer to city/district councils, to avoid confusion with the term Council which may be used to refer to a Council of Social Services.

2 The Community Outcomes Process and LTCCP: Background

2.1 Strategic planning in the 1990s

Strategic planning was increasingly taken up by New Zealand local authorities during the 1990s as awareness grew about the need for longer-term planning in central government (see, for example, Boston and Pallot, 1997). This reflected a growing interest internationally in public sector strategic planning (Hughes, 1998; Joyce, 2000).

While plans had been written by various local authorities before this time that were strategic in nature, there was no overall national trend to do corporate strategic planning for the Council, much less for the community. The 1989 changes to the Local Government Act did not require a strategic plan; however, they led to the development of a corporate planning culture within local authorities. A survey of all 86 local authorities undertaken by Local Government New Zealand in 1999 found that the majority of local authorities had produced some type of strategic plan. Indeed, of the 86 councils surveyed, 53 had produced two or more strategic plans of some type (Johnston, 2001). Moreover, the majority of respondents indicated that the plans were written in partnership with stakeholders. However, there was still a sizeable minority of nearly 40 per cent (or 33 authorities) that did not have some kind of strategy document. Furthermore, the survey also revealed that

> ... despite the very clear evidence of considerable effort, commitment, time and resources going into the Strategic Plan, not all of the plans were considered to have the greatest influence on the actions of the associated council (Johnston, 2001: n.p.).

In summary, while there were fairly widespread efforts by the end of the 1990s to undertake strategic planning, the effectiveness was uneven and there remained a significant number of local authorities that did no strategic planning. Where there was a strategic plan, in some cases this was a plan for the organisation (that is, for the local authority), rather than a plan for the community.

2.2 Strategic planning under the Local Government Act 2002

The change of government in 1999 led to a major review of local government legislation. At the same time as the review of local government legislation was being undertaken, the Labour-led government embarked on a major initiative known as the Review of the Centre. The Review aimed to improve integration within the state sector (both horizontally across different portfolios to overcome what is widely known as the 'silo-isation' of the public sector) and also vertically between head office and regional and local offices of departments and ministries. New processes were also introduced to promote a strategic and outcome-focused approach to central government activities, such as the requirement for Public Service Chief Executives to present a Statement of Intent to Parliament each year that sets out how their agency will manage for outcomes over the medium term. As Cheyne, O'Brien and Belgrave (2005: 132) note:

"The public management reforms of the Labour-led Government reflect a wider international interest in 'governing for results', as Western governments are confronted on the one hand by public distrust and cynicism about what governments do, and on the other hand, continue to search for effective ways of addressing complex problems of poverty, social exclusion, and environmental degradation that have eluded the market-based solutions promoted in the 1980s and 1990s."

It was in this climate of increased interest in the benefits of strategic planning and management for public sector decision-making that the Local Government Act was passed in 2002. The Act seeks to strengthen planning, reporting and consultation processes. Section 91 of the Act requires local authorities to develop a process for identification of the outcomes[4] that the community values. Local authorities are required to report on the achievement of these Community Outcomes every three years. The local authority must then identify which outcomes it (that is, the regional/city/district council) will assist in promoting and delivering, how it will do so, the costs associated with those outcomes and how it will fund those costs. This information is to be contained in a new long term planning document called a Long Term Council Community Plan. An Annual Plan is still a requirement but in an abbreviated form. Other stakeholders in the community are encouraged to align their annual and strategic plans and budgets with the Community Outcomes that have been identified. Therefore, collaboration between the local authority and other key stakeholders in the community to achieve community outcomes becomes important.

A template for a Community Outcomes process is set out in the *KnowHow Guide to Decision-Making under the Local Government Act 2002* (New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers *et al*., 2003). This template emphasises that the community that is to be involved in the Community Outcomes process includes other local authorities, central government, the community and voluntary sector, the private sector and the general public. Community Outcomes should reflect the community's judgment about what is central to its well-being. These outcomes belong to the community, not the local authority.

The new planning processes are in their infancy. Initially local authorities were required to produce an interim Long Term Council Community Plan for which they did not have to undertake a comprehensive COP but could utilise existing information about preferred Community Outcomes generated in previous strategic planning and similar exercises. The full COP is required by to be adopted by 1 July 2006. Nine local authorities adopted their first (interim) LTCCP in 2003. The remaining councils adopted their first LTCCP in 2004. During 2004 most councils embarked on a full COP in preparation for developing a full LTCCP in 2006. In summary, then, it is important to recognise that different local authorities have embarked on the Community Outcomes process at different times and used different approaches and that this might affect interaction between them and local COSS.

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[4] An outcome is defined as "a desired result or state of affairs. Another way of viewing community outcomes is as 'the things that the community thinks are important for its well-being'" (New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers *et al*., 2003: 39)

Below is a diagram of a possible Community Outcomes Process as described in the *KnowHow Guide to Decisionmaking Under the Local Government Act 2002* (New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers *et al*., 2003:43).

Figure 1
A Possible Outcomes Process
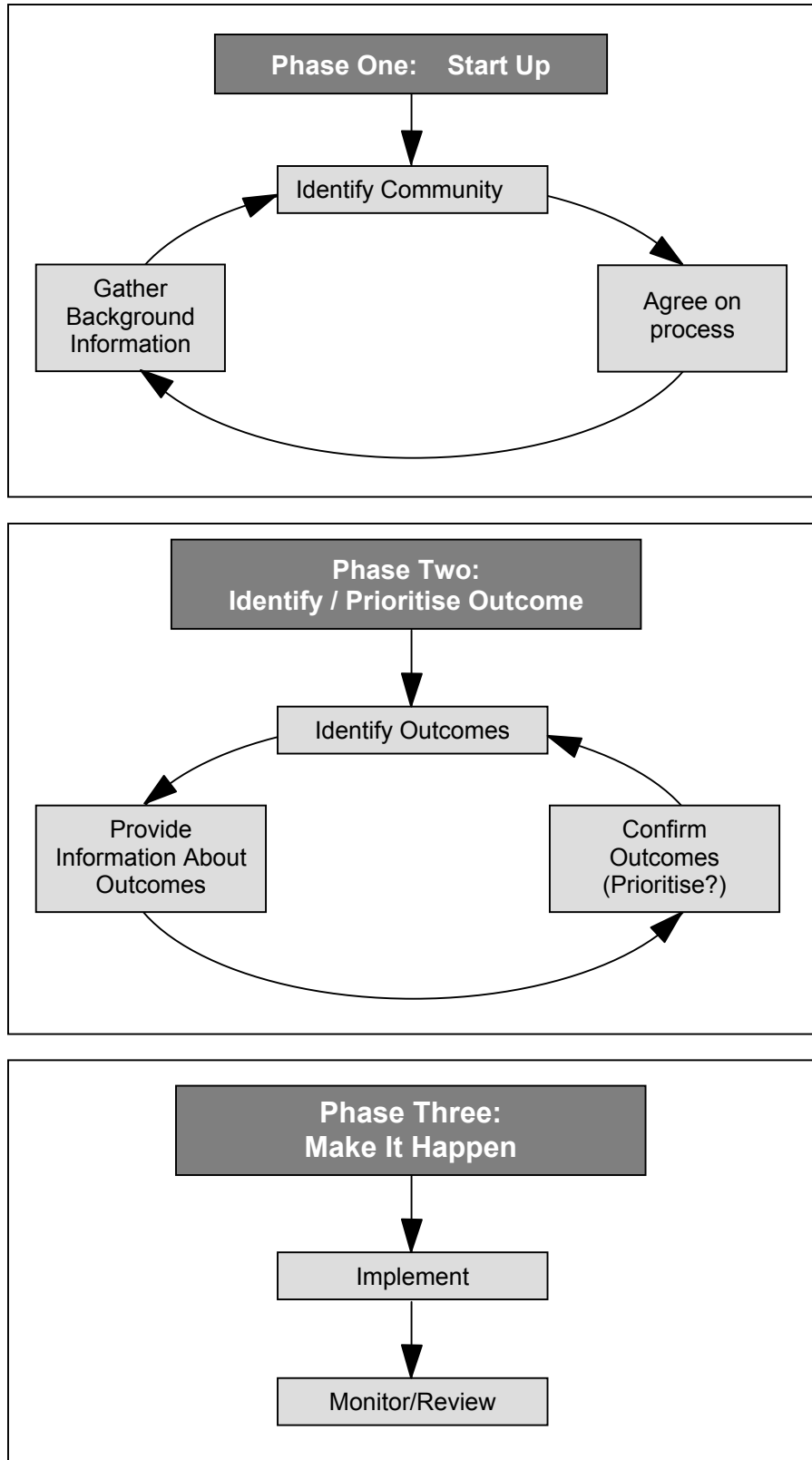
3   SURVEY

3.1   Overview of Survey

At the commencement of this research project, the NZCOSS National Co-ordinator rang all the members on its database to inform them of the research and to advise them that a questionnaire would be distributed to them by email. From this exercise NZCOSS ascertained that they had 44 functioning member Councils around the country and current contact details were obtained to ensure that the questionnaire would reach the appropriate person.

A pilot test of the questionnaire was undertaken in May 2005. This involved sending the questionnaire to three prospective respondents who had agreed to assist with the pilot as well as some other individuals who had an interest in the project. Minor changes were made to the questionnaire and those who were involved in the pilot confirmed that the questionnaire itself and the receipt and despatch of it posed no particular problems for them.

Between 27 May and 1 June 2005 the questionnaire was sent out to most members via an email attachment. (The survey is attached as Appendix 2). A few survey forms had to be posted or faxed to members who did not have an email facility.

Two reminder email messages were sent out during June. On 29 June a telephone call was made to those who that had not yet returned their forms. The last questionnaire included in the data analysis was received was on 8 July. A total of 30 completed survey forms were used for the quantitative data analysis, giving a 68% response rate. This rate is regarded as satisfactory for postal and similar surveys.

While fourteen COSS did not respond, we are confident that these COSS do not have any specific characteristics that would cause their responses to differ from the responses we received. We therefore have assumed that the 68% that responded are reasonably representative of all the COSS in New Zealand, while recognising that not all areas of New Zealand have a Council of Social Services and that within the Councils of Social Services that responded there is great diversity.[5] The non-response is likely to be a reflection of the significant demands on the limited resources of COSS and similar organisations. Many of the key local people are indeed volunteers, as the research revealed. Groups are also in a state of flux. This is an inherent difficulty when doing research that involves the community and voluntary sector. As noted above, efforts were made to encourage and assist local COSS to respond to the questionnaire.

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[5] A further questionnaire was received on 15 August and was included in the map but was not able to be included in the quantitative data analysis. This was useful, nevertheless, to test our assumption that there were no significant differences between responses received and those that did not return their questionnaire.

3.2　Background Information about Councils of Social Services

Respondents were firstly asked to provide information about their own organisation. The approximate boundaries of each COSS are represented in Figures 2 and 3 on pages 11 and 13. It should be noted that these are approximate boundaries and based on information supplied by respondents. The majority of respondents indicated that they cover the entire local authority boundary within which they are located. Others extend over the neighbouring boundaries and include either a part or all of another local authority area if there is not a Council of Social Services located there (for example, Christchurch COSS). A few include an entire regional area, such as Southland. There are a number that cover townships within a local authority area, such as Tokoroa and Putaruru which are both within South Waikato District Council area.

The approximate boundaries of the Ministry of Social Development Regions are shown in Figure 4 on page 15.

Figure 2
North Island Regional Council and Territorial Authority Boundaries
with COSS Coverage

Figure 2

North Island
Regional Council and Territorial Authority boundaries with COSS coverage

Legend

COSS

- Auckland District COSS
- Cambridge
- Colville Social Services Collective
- Feilding Social Issues Network (SINCOSS)
- Franklin COSS
- Gisborne East Coast COSS
- Howick and Pakuranga COSS (HAPCOSS)
- Kaitaia
- Kauri Trust Youth Services
- Matamata COSS
- North Shore COSS
- Otorohanga Support House
- Pacific Island Cultural SS Trust & Wellington COSS
- Palmerston North Community Services Council
- Putaruru COSS
- Taupo COSS
- Tokoroa COSS
- Waiheke COSS
- West Auckland District COSS
- Whangarei COSS
- Whitianga Community Services Trust

Regional Council Boundaries

- Region

NORTHLAND

AUCKLAND

BAYOFPLENTY

WAIKATO

GISBORNE

TARANAKI

HAWKESBAY

HORIZONS

WELLINGTON

N

0   25   50   100 km

Scale 1:2,250,000

Data source: Ollivier & Co Ltd. 2002

Compiled by Rachel Summers
GIS Programme,
Massey University

Figure 3

South Island Regional Council and Territorial Authority Boundaries with COSS Coverage

Figure 3

**South Island
Regional Council and Territorial Authority boundaries with
COSS coverage**

Legend

COSS

- Alexandra COSS
- Ashburton COSS
- Buller REAP
- Christchurch COSS
- Dunedin COSS
- Family Focus Centre, Greymouth
- Marlborough Community Workers
- Southland Regional Support Group

Regional Council Boundaries

- Region

TASMAN

NELSON

MARLBOROUGH

WESTCOAST

CANTERBURY

OTAGO

SOUTHLAND

N

0 25 50 100 km

Scale 1:2,500,000

Data source: Ollivier and Co, 2002

Compiled by Rachel Summers
GIS Programme,
Massey University
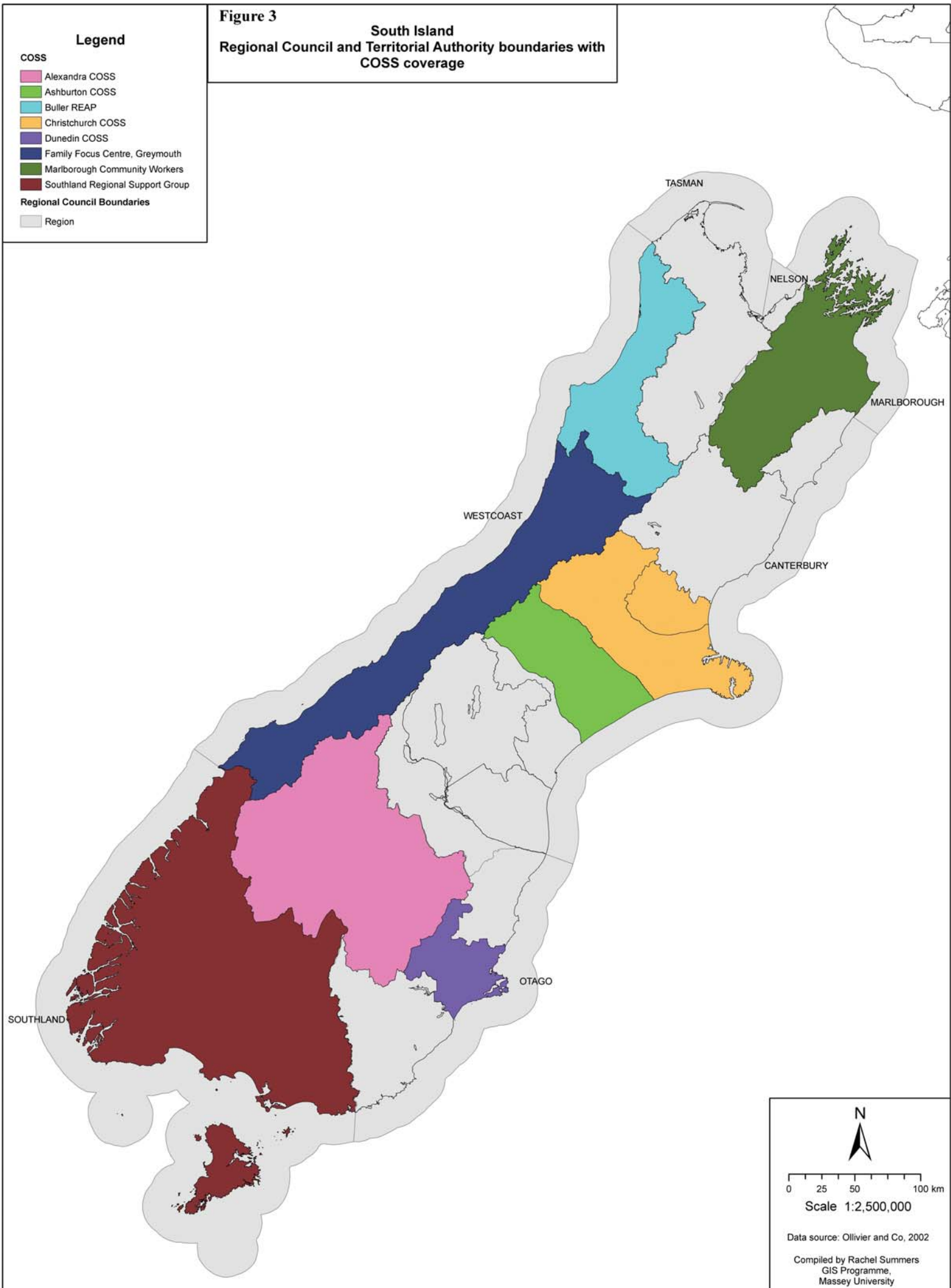
Figure 4

Ministry of Social Development Approximate Regions

Legend

- Northland
- Auckland
- Waikato
- Bay of Plenty
- East Coast
- Taranaki
- Central
- Wellington
- Nelson
- Canterbury
- Southern

N
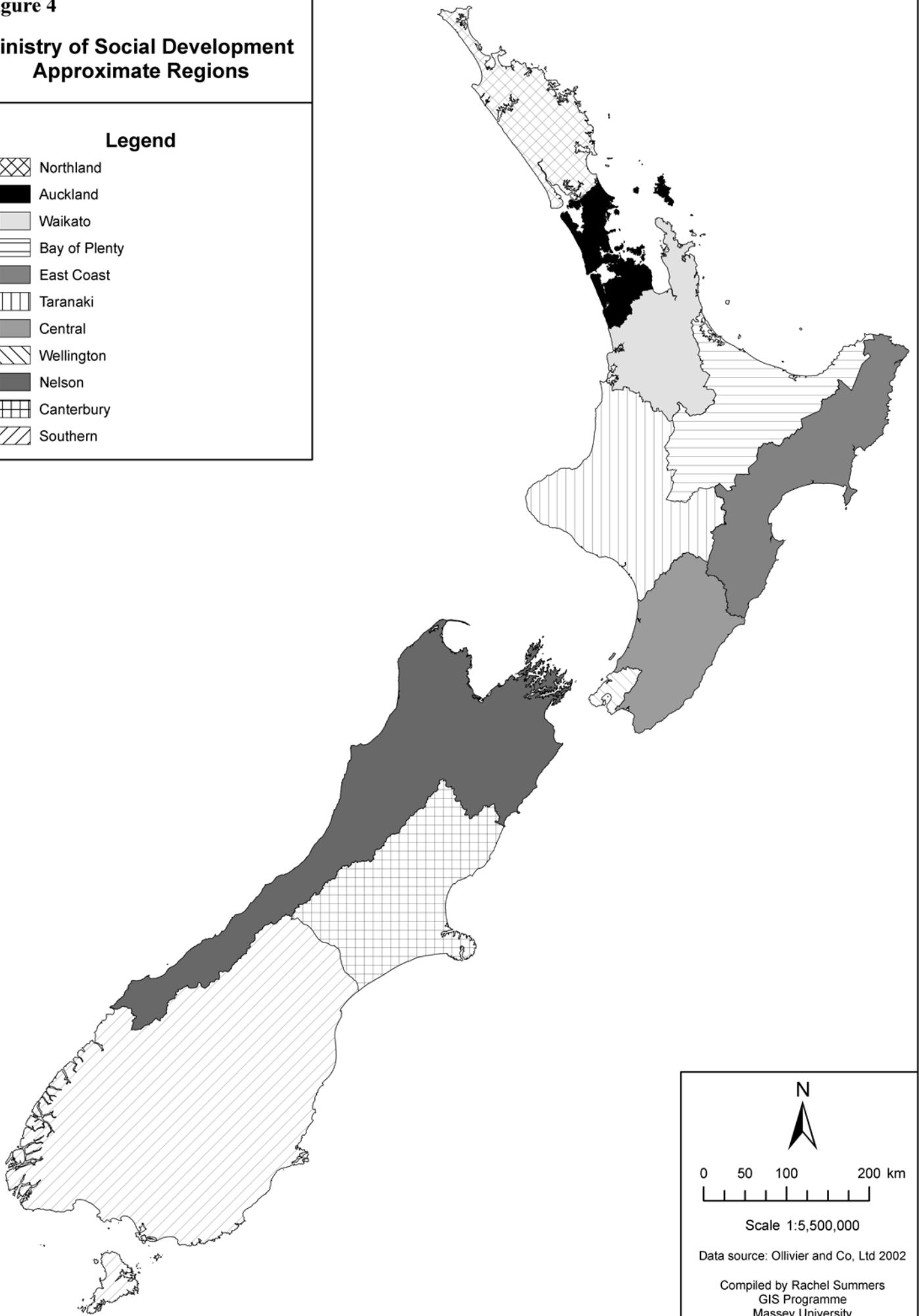
0   50   100   200 km

Scale 1:5,500,000

Data source: Ollivier and Co, Ltd 2002

Compiled by Rachel Summers
GIS Programme
Massey University

Main Activities

Respondents were asked to list up to 4 main activities that their organisation undertakes. The most frequently mentioned activity (listed by 24 organisations or 80% of respondents) was administration and other support for community groups and/or provision of a newsletter. This was followed by community education and development through seminars, workshops and trainings (67%), networking and meetings (50%), provision of social services and support (50%), advocacy through submissions and lobbying (40%), gathering and disseminating information (23%) and providing a facility for community groups (23%). Four organisations said that they assisted people and supported families through counselling. Two organisations said that they undertook research and a further two organisations said that they distributed funding on behalf of their local authority to community groups.

Main Activities of Councils of Social Services			Table 1
Activity	**N**	**% of cases**	**% of all responses**
Gathering and disseminating information	7	6.5%	**23.3%**
Networking/Meetings	15	13.9%	**50.0%**
Submissions and lobbying/Advocacy	12	11.1%	**40.0%**
Community education and development through seminars, workshops	20	18.5%	**66.7%**
Provision of social services/Support	15	13.9%	**50.0%**
Administrative and other support for community groups/Newsletters	24	22.2%	**80.0%**
Providing a facility for community groups	7	6.5%	**23.3%**
Research	2	1.9%	**6.7%**
Assisting People/Counsellor/Monitoring/Family Support	4	3.7%	**13.3%**
Distributing funding on behalf of Council to community group	2	1.9%	**6.7%**
Total	**108**	**100.0%**	**360.0%**

When organisations were asked to list up to 3 other activities in which they would like to be involved, the most frequently mentioned activity was initiating and supporting projects (listed by 12 organisations or 57% of those organisations answering this question). This was followed by education and training, (48%), advocacy (24%) and research and development (24%). Community housing, information packs/newsletters, assisting people and extending the network were activities that were also mentioned, though in each case by only two respondents.

Strengths

Respondents listed their main strengths as networking, advice and information sharing (48%), strong relationships (28%) and social service provision and support (24%). This was followed by providing a community venue (21%), working well together (17%), community development and consultation (14%), being an umbrella group for other organisations (14%) and good knowledge and skill base (14%).

Main Strengths of Councils of Social Services			Table 2
Main Strengths	**N**	**% of cases**	**% of all responses**
Networking, advice and information sharing	14	21.5%	**48.3%**
Well attended forums, meetings and seminars/wide representation	2	3.1%	**6.9%**
Taken seriously by central and local government and social services	2	3.1%	**6.9%**
Community development/consultation	4	6.2%	**13.8%**
Social service provision/support	7	10.8%	**24.1%**
Newsletter	2	3.1%	**6.9%**
Umbrella for other organisations	4	6.2%	**13.8%**
Funding	1	1.5%	**3.4%**
Community run, breadth of membership	2	3.1%	**6.9%**
Strong relationships	8	12.3%	**27.6%**
Good knowledge and skill base	4	6.2%	**13.8%**
Providing community venue/good location	6	9.2%	**20.7%**
Working well together	5	7.7%	**17.2%**
Having a paid coordinator	2	3.1%	**6.9%**
Advocacy	1	1.5%	**3.4%**
Other	1	1.5%	**3.4%**
Total	**65**	**100%**	**224.1%**

Governance and Management

The overwhelming majority of respondents (90%) have either a board or committee for their governance structure. All of these also have either a terms of reference or a constitution. The number of local social sector organisations that are part of the COSS group or network varies enormously. Just over a quarter (26% or 7 COSS) have between 1-20 organisations as part of their network and another quarter have between 21-50 organisations. Three COSS have a network of 51-100, four have 101-150 and six COSS have networks that are in excess of 150 members. Seventeen COSS would like other groups to be part of their network while 10 COSS were satisfied with the existing

coverage of their network. Other broad categories of organisations that they would like to include ranged from other not-for-profit groups (mentioned by 14 organisations), government departments (mentioned by 6), followed by business, education, sporting and District or City Councils.

Twenty respondents (69%) have a paid co-ordinator, with most (45%) working between 31-40 hours per week. A quarter of the co-ordinators work 1-10 hours per week, 20% work between 21 –30 hours and the remainder (10%) work between 11-20 hours per week.

Paid Hours Worked by Co-ordinator		Table 3
Number of paid hours worked by Co-ordinator	N	%
1-10	5	25.0%
11-20	2	10.0%
21-30	4	20.0%
31-40	9	45.0%
Total	20	100.0%

Just over half the respondents (53%) also employ other paid staff. Fifty percent employ one other staff person, a quarter have 2, while 2 COSS employ between 6-10 staff, 2 employ between 11-20 and 1 employs in excess of 20 staff. Hours per week worked by these other staff varies. Of the 17 COSS that responded to this question, 5 or 29% said their staff worked between 1-10 hours per week, 29% worked in excess of 100 hours per week while 3 said they worked between 11-50 hours and a further 3 between 50-100 hours.

Key Relationships

The majority of COSS (86%) have relationships with Māori and/or iwi. The most common type of involvement was the local iwi or Māori group being a member of COSS (61%). This was followed by a liaison and advisory relationship (35%), knowledge of contact people within iwi (22%), involvement of Māori in COSS projects (17%) and attendance at Māori-led meetings (13%).

Sixteen COSS (55%) said that they did not work closely with other COSS compared with 13 that said they did work closely with (an)other COSS. Of those that said they did work closely with (an)other COSS, that involvement was mainly receiving newsletters. Also mentioned were attending regular regional meetings, close liaison and networking, and referrals between COSS. COSS tended to work most closely with their neighbouring or regional groupings of COSS. NZCOSS was mentioned frequently as were Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington, West Auckland and North Shore COSS for their newsletters.

Respondents were asked to list up to 8 of their key local organisations with which they have important working relationships. The most common organisation mentioned 59 times (31% of all suggestions) was other social service organisations. This was followed by District/City Councils or community boards, the health sector, volunteer centres, iwi/Māori and NZCOSS. Government departments were mentioned a total of 28 times. The most commonly mentioned government department was the Ministry of Social Development, followed by the Department of Child Youth and Family Services and then the Police and the Department of Internal Affairs.

Organisations with which COSS have key working relationships			Table 4
Organisation	**N**	**% of cases**	**% of all responses**
Iwi/ Māori group	11	5.8%	36.7%
District or City Council and or Community Boards	20	10.6%	66.7%
Schools / University	6	3.2%	20.0%
Ministry of Social Development (MSD)	8	4.2%	26.7%
Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)	2	1.1%	6.7%
Department of Child, Youth and Family Service (CYF)	9	4.8%	30.0%
Police	3	1.6%	10.0%
Health Sector/Women's Refuge/Plunket	17	9.0%	56.7%
Resource Centre	4	2.1%	13.3%
Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB)	5	2.6%	16.7%
Safer Community Council	1	0.5%	3.3%
Community Trust	6	3.2%	20.0%
NZCOSS	7	3.7%	23.3%
Age Concern	3	1.6%	10.0%
Volunteer Centre	16	8.5%	53.3%
Community Law Centre	3	1.6%	10.0%
Other Social Service agencies/community groups	59	31.2%	196.7%
Other government departments	6	3.2%	20.0%
Churches	3	1.6%	10.0%
Total	**189**	**100.0%**	**630.0%**

3.3   Current and Recent Linkages with Local Government

The second part of the questionnaire aimed to find out about the current and recent linkages between COSS and their city/district council. Twelve respondents or 40% said that they had 'sometimes' made submissions as part of the annual planning process prior to 2003. A third said that they used to make submissions 'very often' or 'regularly' while 27% said 'never' or 'hardly ever'. When asked about their COSS involvement in local authority strategic planning activity carried out prior to 2003, 43% of respondents said they were involved 'sometimes', 37% said they were 'never' or 'hardly ever' involved, while 20% of respondents said they were 'very often' or 'regularly' involved.

Although involvement in earlier strategic planning processes was not overly high, 73% of respondents who answered this question said that they had been involved in the recent Community Outcomes Process, while a small number (17%) said they had no involvement and three respondents were not sure.

COSS involvement in Community Outcomes Process		Table 5
Level of COSS involvement in COP	**N**	**%**
Yes	22	73.3%
No	5	16.7%
Dont know/not sure	3	10.0%
Total	**30**	**100.0%**

One third of respondents felt that their involvement had been 'very worthwhile', and a third said it was 'OK'. Four respondents felt that their involvement had not been worthwhile.

When asked about their satisfaction with their involvement in the COP, a number of respondents said that it was too early to say as the process had just begun or the results of the process had not yet been released. Some mentioned that they had been included from the beginning, had received ongoing information and felt that it was a good exercise. Others were not so happy with the process as facilitated by the local authority and one COSS ran their own consultation exercise. A number of COSS mentioned difficulties with the process because of changes in key staff at the local authority and changes in their own chairpersons.

Just over half (55% or 16 COSS) said that they had made a submission on their local authority's LTCCP in 2003 or 2004. Two-thirds (67%) of respondents had received information about the development of the full LTCCP for 2006. Slightly more than a third of respondents (11 or 37%) felt that the information provided by the local authority about the LTCCP process was OK. A further 23% said it was fairly good, while 20% or 6 COSS said it was excellent. Five respondents (17%) said that it was not very adequate.

One third of respondents rated their relationship, in general, with their local city/ district council as being 'fairly good'. A further 27% rated their relationship as 'excellent', 17% described it as 'weak' while 10% said it was 'OK'. One COSS described its relationship as non-existent.

When asked why their relationship with the local authority' was 'fairly good' or 'excellent' in terms of the Community Outcomes Process or LTCCP, responses fell into three main areas. First, strong links had been built up with the local authority over many years by constant liaison and discussions. These COSS had made submissions in the past and were proactive in their communication with the Council. The COSS continually worked at the relationship. Second, these COSS felt that they had a good reputation with strong networks in the community, a proven track record and were a good partner for the local authority to help get community feedback. The third main grouping of comments was that COSS had linkages with either the Mayor, Councillors or staff members. These people regularly attended COSS meetings. Another linkage existed where COSS Co-ordinators had been past Councillors. A few COSS also mentioned that they thought their relationship was good because they had a contract to deliver particular services for the local authority which was mutually beneficial. Another said that their local authority was prepared to sit down around a table and talk with them openly and honestly.

When asked why their relationship with the local authority was 'weak' or 'non-existent' in terms of the Community Outcomes Process or LTCCP, a number of COSS said that they felt that they were not listened to, not taken seriously and had no direct input or influence. A few attributed their poor relationship to having lost key contacts within the local authority. Some said that their particular local authority appeared not to be interested in community development or have a 'social perspective'.

3.4 Involvement of Councils of Social Services in Community Outcomes and LTCCP Processes

The third and final part of the questionnaire aimed to find out about the involvement of Councils of Social Services in the new planning processes introduced by the Local Government Act 2002, the strengths of the COSS in terms of this involvement and where further support and development might be useful.

Respondents were asked what they considered were the two key benefits for their local authority from their involvement in the COP and LTCCP. Many respondents noted the benefit to their local authority was the ability to discuss issues and ideas with a wide range of individuals in the social sector and community groups through the COSS network. The local authority could also learn about needs in the community through the networks the COSS was part of rather than having to establish its own contacts with each community group from scratch. As a result information-gathering was made much easier for the local authority. Another benefit was that the local authorities would gain credibility with, and a mandate from, the community and voluntary sector. Other comments made were that the involvement helped to develop and strengthen

relationships, local authorities would be aware of COSS aspirations for input into the plan, there would be fewer submissions due to the networking and collaboration functions of COSS and the LTCCP would be more readily accepted as the community had ownership of the proposals and was involved with the final outcomes.

Positive aspects for COSS from the Community Outcomes Process were many and varied. Many respondents were pleased that local authorities were listening to their views and in some cases taking them on board. One COSS said that it was positive to be asked to take part and then to see their contribution in the draft Community Outcomes. Another felt that every sector was receiving equal attention and as a result of the process each sector should be more knowledgeable about the District's issues. Respondents said that as a result of the process they had got to know key local authority staff better and there was increased dialogue. As a result of the process one local authority now had appointed a representative to the COSS. One COSS appreciated the ease of contributing to the process – local authority staff had recorded comments from a meeting of a large group of community workers and turned them into a submission. Another COSS was pleased with the interest from their members and their willingness to contribute to the process. Another COSS said how they appreciated the opportunity to be involved in strategic planning for their city. A number of respondents said that it was good to see action as a result of concerns they had been raised through this process.

There were many varied responses when COSS were asked if they thought improvements could be made to their involvement in the COP and the development of the LTCCP. A number of respondents said that they needed to feel that they were being listened to. They wanted to be included more and not just at the last minute. Some respondents felt that the local authority was only undertaking the process because they had to. One COSS felt that their potential to facilitate participation by not-for-profit groups was not recognised. COSS could be an active partner instead of just another group. Other suggestions were that working parties and reference groups could be established to look at specific areas and develop strategic responses. Many felt that ongoing annual involvement was important so they did not lose touch and that continual improvements could be made to the process. Other respondents said that they felt that they needed more than one local authority contact person; that the local authority staff should travel to them; that Councillors needed education on the social services sector in their District and its connection with other issues such as environmental; that it would be nice to receive credit for achievements; and that there should be greater use of more interactive forms of community engagement such as electronically and local and targeted meetings for explanation and feedback. It was pointed out by a number of respondents that their involvement was difficult because they were a volunteer organisation and had very little capacity for participation in the new planning processes.

3.5   Summary

Almost all COSS provide what could be considered their core activities – operating and maintaining a network of social services agencies that come together monthly or bi monthly to share information, raise issues and collectively tackle projects of one type or another. Some of these COSS are purely voluntary organisations. Outside of these activities, some provide other services for their members such as producing a newsletter, or providing facilities, education and training, and research. These COSS tend to have paid coordinators and other paid staff. A small number of COSS provide substantial social services to the community usually on contract to government departments. These COSS have a relatively large number of paid staff to carry out these different activities. Despite the differences in activities and paid staff, half of all COSS said their main strength was in networking, advice and information sharing.   A large number also believed that strong relationships were their strength.

The number of COSS that were involved in a local authority's COP was the same number as COSS that had been making submissions on annual plans prior to 2003 (that is, 73%). This suggests that some COSS have become familiar with local authority planning processes and know how to get involved. It could also be that local authorities involved the COSS in their COP because of previous involvement by the COSS in making submissions on the Draft Annual Plan and the relationships that had developed from that contact.   However, some COSS that had not made submissions prior to 2003 had responded to the LTCCP, while 3 COSS had been involved in earlier submissions but had not been involved in the LTCCP process, suggesting that the ability to respond to local authority-driven processes may alter over the life of a COSS according to their changing capacity to respond. Just over half the respondents had received information on the local authority's LTCCP.   Relationships with councils were more positive than negative although there is room for improvement. Reasons given for having good relationships were long lasting and strong links, linkages with elected representatives and staff and COSS credibility. Poor relationships existed where COSS thought they did not command enough respect from the local authority.

4 CASE STUDIES

4.1 Methodology

The purpose of conducting case studies was to increase understanding of COSS involvement in local authority strategic planning processes by finding out in more detail the factors involved in successful or less successful engagement. A draft set of criteria for selection of the case studies was initially developed.

The final selection of the cases was based on the following criteria, in order to get a cross-section of COSS for more in-depth analysis:

- Endorsement from NZCOSS (drawing on existing knowledge about local COSS activities).

- A mix of North Island and South Island Councils of Social Services.

- A mix of different types of local authority (metropolitan, small city, small town/rural).

- Coverage of both those that had already undertaken a fairly comprehensive Community Outcomes Process and those currently undertaking a fairly comprehensive Community Outcomes Process.

Following a review of existing research on Community Outcomes processes (see for example, Burke, 2004; McKinlay 2005) and discussion with NZCOSS, six case studies were selected for this part of the Local Government Mapping Project. These were:

- Alexandra Council of Social Services (ACOSS).

- Christchurch Council of Social Services (CCOSS).

- Gisborne and East Coast Council of Social Services (GISCOSS).

- North Shore Community and Social Services (NSCSS).

- Feilding Social Issues Network Council of Social Services (SINCOSS).

- Tokoroa Council of Social Services (TCOSS).

Table 5 following provides an overview of the Councils of Social Services that were selected.

Overview of Case Study Selection Criteria								Table 5
Council of Social Services	**NZCOSS approval**	**NI/SI balance**	**Population of local authority[1]**	**Metro**	**Small city**	**Small town/ rural**	**Earlier COP[3]**	**Later COP[4]**
Alexandra	✓	✓	14,463			✓	✓	
Christchurch	✓	✓	316,224	✓			✓	
Gisborne East Coast[2]	✓	✓	43,974		✓		✓	
North Shore	✓	✓	184,821	✓				✓
Social Issues Network (Feilding)	✓	✓	27,510		✓			✓
Tokoroa	✓	✓	23,472		✓		✓	

Notes:

1. Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings, 2001 http://www.stats.govt.nz

2. Gisborne also provided an example of a unitary authority which combines both regional and territorial functions.

3. 'Earlier COP' refers to a COSS in an area where the city/district council carried out an extensive Community Outcomes Process prior to the adoption of the first LTCCP in 2003 or 2004.

4. 'Later COP' refers to a COSS in an area where the city/district council is conducting a major Community Outcomes Process prior to the adoption of the full LTCCP in 2006.

The case study research built on the survey data for these local COSS and involved documentary analysis and interviews. Documents that were analysed included :

- Documents relating to the COSS structure and constitution/terms of reference, recent meeting minutes.

- Any submissions to a local authority's Draft Annual Plans in late 1990s/early 2000s.

- Any submissions to the COP.

- Recent Annual Plans and first LTCCP of the relevant local authority.

- Local authority COP information.

- Any contractual documents with local authority.

- Any funding information.

Interviews expanded on the information provided in the questionnaire about membership, governance and management structures, key activities, key relationships, current operational capacity, self-identified strengths, and potential areas for development.

In each of the six case studies, either the COSS Coordinator or a member of the board/governing body/membership collective was interviewed, and at least one staff member of the local authority was interviewed. Most interviews were conducted face-to-face but in some cases that was not possible so an interview was conducted by phone. Interview notes were sent for validation to those who were interviewed.

4.2   Alexandra Council of Social Services (Central Otago District)

4.2.1 Background

Central Otago District Council covers an area of 9959 square kilometres and had a resident population of 14,466 at the 2001 Census (Central Otago District Council, 2005). It has five main towns: Alexandra, Clyde, Cromwell, Ranfurly and Roxburgh. The District Council's Administration Headquarters are in Alexandra. Alexandra had a usually resident population of 4,407 at the 2001 Census. The town's population had declined by 4.5 per cent since 1996.

The Alexandra Council of Social Services (ACOSS) is based in Alexandra and covers all of the Central Otago District Council area and the adjacent areas of Queenstown and Wanaka. However, ACOSS focuses mainly on the Central Otago District Council (CODC) area. The purpose of ACOSS is to ensure that the social services required for the area are in place.

Approximately 16 voluntary sector organisations plus local government and central government departments belong to the ACOSS network. ACOSS is governed by a Committee which is made up of all the members. There is a Chair and a Secretary/Treasurer. The District Council has nominated one Councillor who usually attends its monthly meetings. In addition, the CODC Community Development Officer attends the meetings. The CODC representatives report to the ACOSS meeting on what is happening at the Council and they also report back to CODC from the ACOSS meeting. Often information from ACOSS meetings is included in a CODC newsletter for wider publication.

The Committee does not have any employees. All the work of the COSS is done on a voluntary basis.

ACOSS does not receive any ongoing grant funding from CODC. They do however receive funding from time to time for projects that they are undertaking. A recent example of this is the $1,500 they received for their taxi service project. ACOSS has also been granted use of local authority facilities free of charge for specific events.

The main activities of ACOSS include:

- Monitoring the availability and performance of social services.

- Information sharing through holding regular monthly meetings with sector groups.

- Running specific programmes when required.

- Lobbying for new services when gaps become evident. An example of this is the recent taxi project initiated when Alexandra's only taxi service ceased operating. As there is no public transport in Alexandra this had a major effect on people with no cars, particularly the elderly. ACOSS highlighted the issue, ran its own voluntary service for a while and, at the same time, advertised for a new service. This new service recently commenced.

- Assisting other community groups so they can keep functioning.

- Producing a funding booklet that other community groups can purchase

4.2.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

During 2003 Central Otago District Council invited community views on what it wanted Central Otago to be like in the next 10 years or so, what the main issues were and what people expected of the CODC and other key agencies in the future growth and development of the District. This Community Outcomes Process with district-wide consultation and resulting programme of workshops and action plans were collectively known as Central Prospects.

CODC sent out a survey to all households in the district and more than 500 members of the public participated in various group and public meetings that were held throughout the District. The consultation exercise involved over 18 central government departments and agencies, and many non-government organisations, community groups and organisations as well as private sector businesses.

Initially CODC sent letters to all the relevant central government departments and agencies Chief Executive Officers asking them to advise of the most appropriate people within their organisation to contact to be part of the Community Outcomes process; for example, those that shaped policy in the District. CODC then contacted those people by letter and then sat down with them to discuss how the departments would like to be involved. CODC worked with these people to design the overall Central Prospects process and how they would work specifically with their organisation. CODC also contacted key people in their community to find out how to run the Community Outcomes Process in their particular area. It discussed such things as timing, what groups to contact and location of meetings. CODC was then welcomed into different areas of the District by these groups. ACOSS was considered by CODC to be a strategic group able to reach other groups who might not otherwise be involved in this process and to also progress a number of issues.

A household survey was firstly sent out and asked people to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers to living and working in Central Otago. Local community group meetings and public meetings were then held that provided local communities with an opportunity to tell CODC whether the messages the Council was receiving from the household survey were widely shared, what the big issues facing their community were, and what they wanted for their community. This information was collated and worked up into a summary document. At the end of each public meeting, people were invited to rank the priority issues. The ranking process included district-wide and local issues.

Following the process to identify the Community Outcomes, CODC and its partner organisations met. These meetings were in cluster groups based around the community's big issues of economic development, heritage, water, health services, and so on. These meetings collectively decided on actions, confirmed the measures that would best monitor progress and established timeframes for work completion. These cluster groups identified other groups that could be involved to achieve the Community Outcomes. ACOSS has been identified on the CODC website as one organisation who will be working towards 'Maintaining essential services in local communities'.

ACOSS was initially informed about Central Prospects through the CODC staff member who attends their meetings. ACOSS representatives were specifically invited to meetings and information was provided to ACOSS regular monthly meetings. ACOSS went to all of the Central Prospects sector meetings. When the prioritisation exercise was carried out at the meetings, transportation was an issue that did not make the top priorities. ACOSS felt that it was an important issue for parts of the community and one that would not be addressed through Central Prospects in the immediate future so they have picked it up as a special project for their group. At the time of the research, ACOSS was talking to people about the issue of transportation and are monitoring the situation. ACOSS felt that, as a result of their work, there were already better transport links.

4.2.3 What has Worked Well from Alexandra COSS's Perspective

ACOSS has been impressed with the Central Prospects process, which has given everyone in the community a chance to have an input. ACOSS was provided with reading material before meetings, meetings were open to anyone and they were held in various centres around the district. The information that was provided was clear and understandable. Discussions were held with people in the community that would not have previously had input into this type of consultation. At the meetings there were people from very different backgrounds and perspectives and it was interesting to hear their views. The small group sessions were very good. ACOSS feel that they have been an integral part of the Central Prospects process.

4.2.4 What Has Not Worked So Well from Alexandra COSS's Perspective

ACOSS are concerned that in prioritising, many good issues could be lost. Their view is that it is now important to keep monitoring low priority areas and ensure that some action is taken.

4.3 Christchurch Council of Social Services

4.3.1 Background

Christchurch had a population of 316,227 at the 2001 Census. Its population had increased by nearly 10 per cent between 1991 and 2001 and is expected to grow by approximately 8 per cent between 2001 and 2006. The city covers an area of 45, 250 hectares. Christchurch's population is less ethnically diverse than the New Zealand population. Christchurch Council of Social Services (CCOSS) is based in Christchurch and covers all of the Christchurch City Council area and the surrounding District Council areas of Waimakariri, Banks Peninsula and Selwyn. However CCOSS focuses mainly on Christchurch City.

The purpose of CCOSS is to promote social equity, justice and wellbeing by advocating on issues, empowering groups and facilitating collaboration in the social services sector. CCOSS is committed to giving effect to the Articles of Te Tiriti o Waitaki/ The Treaty of Waitangi.

CCOSS is governed by a Board which has representation from three main areas as follows: (1) seven positions elected from the general membership; (2) nine representatives nominated by sector groups (Aged, Child and Family, Disability, Māori, Mental Health, Pacific Island Peoples, Refugees and New Migrants, Women, and Youth; and (3) representatives of organisations (Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury, one other District Council, a statutory education provider, a statutory health provider, a statutory social welfare provider, and Te Runaka ki Otautahi o Kai Tahu). CCOSS indicated that it finds it difficult to fill all the Board Member positions.

The Board employs an executive officer who works 36 hours per week. A new administrative position has just been created and that person will be paid for 7 hours per week.

There are about 140-150 voluntary sector organisations plus individual memberships, local government and central government departments who are part of the network. About 280 groups and people receive the newsletter directly within Christchurch and the surrounding areas.

CCOSS receives about half of its total yearly funding from the Christchurch City Council ($25,000). The grant is for a year with the indication that a similar level of funding would be provided in the following two years.

The main activities of CCOSS include:

- Social issues overview through input of representatives at the monthly meetings and other forums.

- Information broker mainly through a monthly newsletter for Christchurch, which is, in effect, the 'trade journal' for social services and community organisations in Christchurch.

- The NZCOSS newsletter on contract to NZCOSS.

- Advocacy for the social service sector through writing and presenting submissions.

- Project work through collaborating with others and providing administrative support. For example, the Supervision Project, initiated by (then) Crown Public Health, developed Christchurch's first Supervision Directory. The project is now entirely managed by the voluntary sector as Crown Public Health withdrew after the establishment phase. CCOSS administers the Project on behalf of the Project Team.

  - Fora and seminars. Recent examples include:
    - New structures and role in Christchurch City Council and government departments (organised in collaboration with Christchurch City Council).
    - Working with the media.
    - Election forum for candidates to present their party's social policies.

4.3.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

Christchurch City Council undertook a Community Outcomes Process in 2003-04. A Community Mapping Project formed part of the COP. Jointly initiated by Child Youth and Family as part of its Local Service Mapping initiative and the Christchurch City Council, the Mapping Project was designed to gather information on the city's makeup and the social services that operate in Christchurch. The aim was to get a good over all picture of the community, identify trends and use the information to identify gaps and help with planning. Also extensively involved were the Department of Internal Affairs, He Oranga Pounamu, and representatives of various government departments through Strengthening Families Management Group, and community agencies through Safer Community Council and Healthy Christchurch. The Project was one of four streams of work by which the Christchurch City Council involved the community in developing its Community Outcomes.

The Community Mapping Project aimed to identify:

- Key demographic, social and economic measurements and trends;

- Current trends in government provision and resourcing of services, including outcomes sought, priorities and target groups;

- Current social services provision in the community; including range of providers, the targets and client profiles;

- Key stakeholders' perceptions of the local environment including, trends and issues, social outcomes and priorities, opportunities and limitations and effective interventions;

It also reviewed relevant reports to identify broad principles relating to provision and funding; and analysed the relationship between the trends and the current mix of services.

Methods used to gather information and consult included:

- Gathering information on key demographic, social and economic measurements and trends;

- Interviews with local managers of government agencies to identify current trends in government provision and resourcing of services, including outcomes sought, priorities and target groups;

- A survey to gather information about social service agencies; and

- A questionnaire, interviews, focus groups and a workshop with 120 community providers to obtain key stakeholders' perceptions.

This was an extensive process that was collaborative in nature and well received by community groups and government departments. It was described as an exercise in collaboration as well as an exercise in joint consultation and information gathering. The CCOSS Executive Officer was a member of the project team that led the Christchurch Community Mapping Project through being a Healthy Christchurch representative (CCOSS is one of the Healthy City signatories).

The report of the Community Mapping Project includes information on local demographic and social trends, social service provision and funding as well as people's perceptions of key issues and strengths. The information gathered is available to the wider community to facilitate greater coordination and service planning. This information is intended to provide a basis on which agencies can plan and determine their own priorities.

Following the report of the Community Mapping Project, the City Council's Social Policy Unit produced a series of discussion papers with draft Community Outcomes. These were circulated through the social sector for comment. The Council's Senior Social Policy Analyst presented the discussion papers at a meeting of the CCOSS Board and invited comment and feedback.

The process used to work towards the 2006 LTCCP was entirely different. Initially a Christchurch City Council staff member who had led the 2004 process invited a group (including DIA and CCOSS) to talk about the 2006 process including such things as who should be involved and how the process should run. This group was used to circulate a questionnaire that asked about the previous Community Outcomes and whether they should be changed or not. At the end of 2004 there was an initial workshop where people discussed the Community Outcomes. The staff member then left the Council amid a large restructuring exercise. This has had the effect of making the Council appear very inward focussed and CCOSS considers it has lost many of its important relationships as many staff have left. Since the key staff member has left the Council, CCOSS has had no further involvement in the COP. They did not receive a copy of the draft Community Outcomes from Christchurch City Council and were not aware they were available for public comment until the researcher mentioned it. Nonetheless, CCOSS has been proactive in raising awareness of and encouraging submissions on the draft Community Outcomes once it had the information. For example, CCOSS featured the draft Outcomes in its newsletter and spoke about the draft Outcomes in sector meetings.

4.3.3 What Has Worked Well from the Perspective of CCOSS

The 2004 Community Outcomes Process was perceived as having worked well for CCOSS in particular through having had a key CCOSS member on the project team that designed the process. CCOSS worked alongside the City Council and other government departments gathering information, running workshops and sending out surveys. The CCOSS newsletter was used to raise awareness in the sector. They were able to use their networks to reach and gain input from many social service organisations in the city. There were very good relationships between the executive office at CCOSS and the staff member at the City Council who was in the policy section and responsible for the Community Outcomes for the social stream. CCOSS Board members knew and had good relationships with some City Councillors.

CCOSS also made a written submission on the draft LTCCP and spoke to its submission at a Hearing Committee.

4.3.4 What Has Not Worked So Well from the Perspective of CCOSS

The more recent COP (in preparation for the 2006 LTCCP) did not work so well as the City Council was in the middle of a large restructuring and key staff members left. After an initial workshop CCOSS heard nothing until the draft Community Outcomes were released for public comment.

A weakness with the process is that input to the COP from different social sector groups tends to get passed up and down to the City Council separately and there was not enough conversation across the sector on issues.

4.4 Gisborne and East Coast Council of Social Services

4.4.1 Background

Gisborne District covers 8331 square kilometres and has a population of 43,974 of whom approximately 80% live in and around the city of Gisborne. The Gisborne District Council (GDC) is a unitary authority having responsibility for both regional and territorial functions. In the 2001 Census it was the region with the youngest population in New Zealand and the largest proportion of people identifying themselves as Māori (Gisborne District Council, 2005). GDC adopted a Strategic Plan in 2002 following public consultation. GDC then undertook a comprehensive Community Outcomes Process in 2003.

The community and voluntary sector in GDC has over 500 groups (Gisborne District Council, 2004: 66). Approximately 80% of these groups are located in Gisborne city but some provide services to the rural and East Coast areas from Potaka in the north to Nuhaka in the south. The LTCCP notes that an increasing number of groups have expressed interest in expanding their services to these areas and that the Council's Community Development Unit (CDU) is helping to facilitate this. The Community Development Unit is a unit within the Chief Executive's Department. It is managed by a full-time co-ordinator who reports to the Chief Executive. The CDU staff and GISCOSS executive members have frequent contact by phone, meetings, and email. One of the current Gisborne District Councillors is a former Chair of GISCOSS.

The main activities of GISCOSS are networking, information-sharing, and lobbying around common issues. GISCOSS has monthly meetings attended by approximately 35-40 people. There is also an Executive Committee drawn from the member organisations that meets monthly. In mid 2005 GISCOSS was able to contract for 5 hours of administrative support a week from the Disability Resource Centre as a result of obtaining funding from COGS and the Lotteries Commission. Although this is only a six month contract GISCOSS hopes to get further funding for this purpose.

At GISCOSS meetings there is a correspondence report, any issues coming up that affect the member organisations are discussed, and there is a guest speaker. Each organisation gives an update and is able to raise issues that they want others to know about. The members also develop strategies to address these issues. GISCOSS has had a newsletter which they are currently reviewing; it is possible they will use email for communications. The newsletter goes out to about 150 people. GISCOSS members tend to be mainly social services and health organisations. GISCOSS has iwi groups as members.

GISCOSS does not receive any funding from Council and consider it useful to maintain their independence from Council. However, GDC provides a venue for GISCOSS meetings, which are held in the District Council Chamber.

4.4.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

For the first LTCCP (2004) GDC used information already collected but also undertook a separate Community Outcomes Process in 2003. GDC was able to benefit from the networks, relationships, infrastructure and plans developed as part of the Tairawhiti Taskforce set up as part of a regional development initiative by Jim Anderton in 2000. This covers the Tairawhiti region – which includes part of the GDC area and also includes Wairoa.

Fifteen public meetings were held throughout the District during 2003 and there was consultation with "special informed" stakeholders using existing networks (e.g. community and voluntary sector, Chamber of Commerce). GISCOSS made a submission on the Draft LTCCP in 2004 along with other social sector organisations and it encouraged its member organisations to make submissions.

For the current COP (prior to the development of the 2006 LTCCP) the outcomes have not changed. The first LTCCP was quite broad and GDC is now trying to get more focused and prioritise actions to achieve outcomes. All GDC business units are developing activity management plans that are detailed for the first three years and less detailed for the seven out-years. The GDC Community Development Unit (CDU) is working with GISCOSS to encourage alignment between their plan and the Community Outcomes. For example, GISCOSS had housing as a priority and they are now trying to determine whether the priorities, for example, rural housing or housing in the Gisborne suburb of Kaiti. There will be public consultation on the priorities between January and May 2006.

GISCOSS feels that there is a big difference between the first LTCCP and the next one in terms of the level of awareness in the Council and in the community of what is involved. The CDU Manager commented that staff are constantly reinforcing the message to councillors and to the community that the Council does not own the process. He sees the CDU's job as being to promote the message about community ownership and the opportunities arising from the COP.

4.4.3 What has Worked Well from the Perspective of GISCOSS

There has been a high level of engagement of the social sector. The GDC Social and Strategic Policy Manager met with GISCOSS to talk with them about the COP and the CDU manager works directly with GISCOSS Co-ordinator and Chair. GDC and GISCOSS recognise that GISCOSS can bring knowledge about what the issues are out there in the community, especially the problems for disadvantaged and marginalised groups (e.g. low income, people with mental health issues, and people with housing need).

Since the 2004 local authority elections GDC has had several councillors who GISCOSS feel have a good understanding of the processes of the new Act and one councillor, in

particular, is seen as a community development champion. The Mayor is also seen as an important factor in ensuring successful implementation of the new planning process. In particular, he is recognised as having a good understanding of Māori issues.

4.4.4 What Has Not Worked So Well from the Perspective of GISCOSS

Although GDC is regarded as fairly good at consultation, GISCOSS questioned where some content in the draft LTCCP had come from. GISCOSS called a meeting to have a discussion about the LTCCP around the time it was about to be adopted as they had not been involved in development of LTCCP even though they had had earlier involvement in the COP in 2003.

GISCOSS could have been more fully involved had they had more capacity (e.g. a paid employee who could attend meetings to keep the relationship with Council going).

4.5 North Shore Community and Social Services

4.5.1 Background

North Shore City had a population of 184,821 at the 2001 Census. Established in 1989 from amalgamation of a number of smaller local authorities, it is New Zealand's fourth largest city in terms of population. Its population grew by 7.4 percent between 1996 and 2001 and it is expected to grow to approximately 255,000 by 2021. It has an area of approximately 12,979 hectares.

The North Shore Community and Social Services (NSCSS) is based in North Shore and covers all of the City Council area for its core business. Some specific contracts involve work in outlying areas.

The primary purpose of NSCSS is to be a central source of social services-related information for the community and to take a leadership role for the advocacy of improving social services on the North Shore. This is achieved by remaining an independent forum, which provides a common meeting ground for community groups, social service agencies and individuals. The objective is to facilitate a community development approach among relevant government and community agencies in order to bring about social well-being on the North Shore.

NSCSS began in 1975 and became an incorporated society in 1979. It is governed by an Executive Committee of eight who are elected representatives of North Shore City community groups. The Board employs an Executive Officer for 40 hours per week. There is also a project coordinator, an administrator and administrative support position. These three positions work a total of 88 hours per week.

There are currently 230 paid members plus a further 3,000 on the database who have used the services of NSCSS or who participate in various projects.

The COSS receives yearly income of about $138,000. This is made up of contracts, grants, and income generated from projects and marketing materials sold by NZCOSS. The City Council contributes about $32,000.

The main activities of the NSCSS include:

- Community development;

- Information, training and resources such as newsletters, seminars, networking, meetings and forums;

- Research;

- Income generation; and

- Contract with Auckland COSS to provide their newsletter.

In the last year specific activities that NSCSS have been involved in include:

- Networking meetings on such topics as: health, Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector and Local Government Mayoral Forum;

- Community awards;

- Consultations on such topics as: North Shore City Council Annual Plan and the Community Outcomes Process, Gambling regulations, Charities Commission, Community Sector Taskforce, Waitemata District Health Board community consultation;

- Community representations on such areas as: Community Sector Taskforce, Waitemata District Health Board – Child Health Strategy, Injury Prevention Governance Group and Local Employment Coordination Committee;

- Umbrella agency and employer for the Devonport Community Coordinator, Youth Liaison Team, Migrant Services North Shore, Glenfield Activities Coordinator and Korean Community and Healthy Lifestyle Services;

- Organisation of 11 seminars;

- An Accounting project which was a new initiative for 2005 and involved assisting groups with their accounts by providing training and assistance and providing them with a software package; and

- Information Days.

4.5.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

In late 2004 and early 2005 the North Shore City Council sent NSCSS a letter and then met with them inviting them to participate in focus groups as part of the Community Outcomes Process. NSCSS said that they would be interested in receiving more information and participating in focus groups but that they wanted more information to fully understand the process and how the feedback from the community would be handled. NSCSS were interested in a collaborative approach with the City Council and

other community groups to identify the Community Outcomes and suggested a strategy group made up of representatives from the community as well as the City Council. In response the City Council said that they were facilitating a process not directing it in scope or extent and that the Community Outcomes would be the Community's Outcomes not the City Council's outcomes.

In essence, however, the City Council determined the approach for the Community Outcomes Process and a broad based community strategy group was never established to oversee the process. NSCSS therefore decided that they would see if the community would like them to lead a separate consultation round by sending a questionnaire to its members. This approach was supported by one of the City Councillors. NSCSS received an overwhelming response from their members in support as people see this type of initiative as the role of NSCSS. As a consequence NSCSS sent out a further questionnaire asking about the Community Outcomes. Within a month NSCSS invited community groups to small group forums to discuss the Community Outcomes, including a special meeting with the migrant community in the North Shore. This was an extremely rewarding meeting as the migrants, especially those from Asia, understood issues of growth very well and could easily imagine the future. The Ministry of Social Development and Child Youth and Family were also involved. NSCSS had also previously undertaken research on the social fabric of North Shore and were able to use this information to inform the process. From the meetings and group sessions and other background research, they collected the information together and then sent it back to all those who participated to validate what was written. This community input was then submitted to the North Shore City Council.

The North Shore City Council was also conducting extensive community consultation on the Community Outcomes over the same period. They held 53 focus groups. Four of these groups were run by an independent facilitator with people chosen from the community. In addition, the City Council received 2,500 response cards to information that was sent out. From this information-gathering exercise the information was sorted into themes. Similar themes emerged from the City Council and the NSCSS consultation.

In June 2005, at the time this research was undertaken, the staff at North Shore City Council were considering how to proceed. Their options were to draft about six or seven outcomes based on the 25 key themes that had come through in the information they had received from the community, or to go back to the community and ask them if the community wanted the City Council to draft the outcomes or do something else. The City Council would like to have all the information validated by the community.

Another suggestion was to set up a stakeholder group that would initially meet in mid July 2005 and to task that group with deciding what to do with the information.

4.5.3 What has Worked Well from the Perspective of NSCSS

NSCSS felt that it was better to be involved in some way rather than sit back and criticise, therefore, they carried out their own consultation. NSCSS received overwhelming support from their members to conduct their own community consultation on the Community Outcomes rather than be part of the North Shore City Council consultation process. A large number of groups responded in a short time frame. Central government departments such as Ministry of Social Development used the NSCSS process to have their input in the Community Outcomes process. The groups responded well to another community group (NSCSS) running the consultation. This is because NSCSS has been around for 30 years and has considerable credibility in the community. The migrant community contributed enormously as most of the migrants have come from fast growing centres with growth issues. These sectors of the community felt comfortable in the environment that NSCSS provided for them.

4.5.4 What Has Not Worked So Well from the Perspective of NSCSS

NSCSS felt that at the beginning the community should have been involved in the process in a collaborative way. That means being involved in the design and project management of the consultation process; working as a team with the City Council on how the process would run, who would be involved, how they would be involved and how the information would be collected and summarised into Community Outcomes. Then, following on from that, there should be a collaborative approach to implementing the Community Outcomes, with Council and the community deciding together who would deliver what parts of the Community Outcomes and how and by whom monitoring would be undertaken.

NSCSS suggested at the beginning of the process that there should be a strategy group formed from the key stakeholders in the community to decide on all of these things. This suggestion was not taken up by the City Council. Later, however, the City Council suggested establishing this group to review the information collected from the community. NSCSS felt that this was too late and that they could get caught in the middle. NSCSS felt that community ownership is only possible if key representatives from the community are involved in the entire process and not just called in at various points along the way. Wide representation would mean wide support for the Community Outcomes and a group with a real knowledge base. The group could have been the bridge between the Council and the community.

There are also issues for NSCSS being part of a strategy group in terms of time commitment and resourcing. The staff from the Council did not know if they would be able to fund NSCSS to be on a strategy group. NSCSS have found that both central government and local government want their involvement and input into a large number of projects and initiatives and as a result the workload can be very heavy.

4.6 Social Issues Network Council of Social Services (SINCOSS - Manawatu District)

4.6.1 Background

The Social Issues Network Council of Social Services (SINCOSS) is based in Feilding which is also the administrative centre of the Manawatu District Council. Feilding is the largest town in the District. Feilding's usually resident population was 13,641 at the 2001 Census. The District covers 253,164 hectares, stretching from Rangiwahia in the north to Himatangi Beach in the south. The District as a whole had a usually resident population of 27, 510 at the 2001 Census. Both Feilding and the Manawatu District as a whole had experienced a small population decline (just under 3 per cent) between 1996 and 2001.

SINCOSS is made up of approximately 30 groups. Members of SINCOSS include some Palmerston North groups that work in the Feilding/MDC area (e.g. Women's Refuge, Youth One Stop Shop). Some SINCOSS members are members of marae committee and/or the MDC Māori Consultative Committee. Some members are happy just to receive the minutes of meetings while others are regular participants in monthly meetings. During the last two years, following the resignation of a long-standing executive member, the group has had a roster for its monthly meetings with a different group taking responsibility each time for facilitating the meeting.

MDC appointed its first Community Development Advisor around the same time as SINCOSS moved to the shared facilitation role. An action plan is formulated at each meeting. The roster has been good for developing 'buy-in'/ownership from the SINCOSS members. There is no local Council of Social Services or equivalent group in the neighbouring Rangitikei District.

SINCOSS does not have its own phone number or website but operates out of MDC's Community House (next door to MDC offices). Literacy Feilding has a secretary/administrator who is contracted to provide services for SINCOSS. The MDC Community Development Advisor has strong links with the SINCOSS organising committee and attends its monthly meetings.

Manawatu District Council provides a significant amount of in-kind support for SINCOSS. For example, the MDC Community Development Advisor produced the monthly roster for SINCOSS meetings and emails information to the Network members. The Council's Community House has a seminar room that groups can book for meetings. SINCOSS has free use of this facility. Minutes of SINCOSS meetings are distributed electronically by the MDC Community Development Advisor. The MDC Community Development Advisor has done a training needs assessment and MDC has produced a social services directory.

MDC's Community Development Funding Policy ensures that funding is available for projects that best fulfil outcomes identified in the LTCCP, the District Leisure Plan and

the District Youth Strategy. SINCOSS receives an annual grant from MDC's Community Development Fund. Minutes of SINCOSS are included in divisional reports to Councillors so they are informed about SINCOSS activities and issues.

The Community Development Advisor at MDC is a key person within SINCOSS, although this is a relatively new position having been established only in early 2003. However, it was noted that MDC staff and elected members recognise the value of SINCOSS. The 2004 floods and storm damage in Feilding and the surrounding region reinforced the important role played by a network like SINCOSS. Following the floods and storm damage, SINCOSS and its member groups had a key role in supporting people in the District and providing a link between the community and the Council.

4.6.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

Manawatu District undertook a major consultation in 1997/1998 about the future of the District as part of its Tomorrow Today strategic planning project (Manawatu District Council, 2004 Vol II: 6). MDC's strategic plan, *The Path to Tomorrow*, was reviewed in 1999/2000. Over 17 public meetings were held in different parts of the District attended by over 500 people. Information from that review was utilised in the development of the first LTCCP adopted in June 2004. A COP Steering Group was set up and decided to meet with stakeholder groups regarding the process. The COP Steering Group includes the Mayor, a Councillor, two community representatives, and two staff (one of whom is the Community Development Advisor).

Meetings were held with a range of stakeholders (for example, environmental groups, social sector groups, business, etc.) in late 2004.

4.6.3 What has Worked Well from the Perspective of SINCOSS

MDC met with SINCOSS and leisure and recreation stakeholders and a further meeting was held with SINCOSS members. Because those who attended felt that a much wider group of social services organisations should hear about the COP, SINCOSS arranged for the same presentation to be repeated for groups that had not attended the initial meeting. After the meetings with SINCOSS, the MDC Strategic Planner sent a letter welcoming a continuing relationship with SINCOSS to which SINCOSS responded favourably.

The MDC Community Development Advisor plays a liaison role between SINCOSS and the council staff involved in the COP (e.g. Strategic Planner). For example, when SINCOSS had some concerns about the Council's response to a letter from SINCOSS about opportunities for on-going involvement in the COP the Community Development Advisor relayed the concerns from SINCOSS to the relevant staff member within MDC.

There is a level of understanding among SINCOSS members that they expect to be involved. Some are very busy with their own organisations; others see it has a fantastic opportunity.

SINCOSS is aware that it and the sector that it belongs to contribute to the well-being of the community so they have to be involved. SINCOSS and its member organisations work at the 'coalface' in the sense of having close links to disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups who lack well-being. SINCOSS has been recognised by MDC as an important network for engaging on issues in the community as SINCOSS and its members are in touch with what is happening in the District.

SINCOSS noted that the close relationships with the Mayor that are possible in a smaller community – and the personal qualities of the Mayor in being very approachable – contributed to the positive linkages between MDC and SINCOSS.

4.6.4 What has Not Worked So Well from the Perspective of SINCOSS

The MDC Community Outcomes Steering Group sought feedback on the COP presentations to stakeholders (e.g. it asked how the groups found the presentation). However, it was suggested that perhaps the District Council had missed an opportunity to complete the loop by not going back to LTCCP submitters to see how they found the document, the process, and the hearings. In the future they could send the draft outcomes or draft LTCCP to selected groups and greater use could be made of the Council's Communication Officer to ensure better public understanding of the process and the final Community Outcomes. At the time this research was carried out, Manawatu District Council had not produced its Community Outcomes although they were expected to be identified later in 2005.

4.7 Tokoroa Council of Social Services

4.7.1 Background

The Tokoroa Council of Social Services is based in Tokoroa and covers the townships of Tokoroa, Putaruru, Tirau, Arapuni and Mangakino. TCOSS works with the South Waikato District Council (SWDC). Tokoroa township had a usually resident population of 14,427 at the 2001 Census, and had experienced a decline of just over 7% between 1996 and 2001. The South Waikato District has a population of around 25,000 which is ethnically diverse with Europeans comprising 57%, a much higher than average Māori population (29%) and Pacific Island population (9%).

The purpose of the Tokoroa Council of Social Services is:
- To assist in coordinating and liaison of social service agencies and individuals for the purpose of achieving effective, comprehensive and culturally appropriate social services in the Tokoroa community;

- To study social conditions, problems, systems and community facilities for Tokoroa and to endeavour to arrange for the meeting of such needs as they arise; and

- Generally to do such things as are necessary or desirable to further the interests or activities of organisations and individuals assisting in alleviating distress or hardship or are assisting in rehabilitation and educating individuals in the Tokoroa community.

TCOSS is governed by an Executive. A number of organisations have representatives on the Executive. They include South Waikato District Council, the Senior Citizens and Welfare Centre, and the Citizens Advice Bureau. The rest of the Executive is voted on at a public meeting from the community at large. Some of the people on the TCOSS executive are on the Boards of other community organisations. This is a deliberate move to spread the expertise that TCOSS has built up around the community.

The Executive employs a manager who works 37.5 hours per week. There are 17 other staff working under TCOSS, totalling 455 hours per week.

Approximately 180 groups are part of the TCOSS network. About 70 people attend their monthly meetings and of those 60-80% would be from the voluntary sector.

TCOSS has a contract with SWDC to the value of $17,000. TCOSS used to receive a grant from the SWDC. However, TCOSS felt that they were using almost all of the District Council's community grant money and that it should be spread around other community groups. It also does not like grant funding given that it is unreliable. Some contracts for services with central government are now for three years and provide some certainty. The positive aspects of contracts have led TCOSS to negotiate a contract with South Waikato District Council.

TCOSS has an office that provides the normal type of COSS functions. These are information and advocacy; organisational maintenance, support and expertise for community groups and the voluntary sector; publication of a newsletter; public meetings; education and training; facilities for hire for the voluntary sector; photocopying for groups and managing financial support for groups. TCOSS acts as an umbrella for a number of groups for 6-12 months to get them established or assist them to be independent. TCOSS is the head tenant in the building that they occupy at the hospital. TCOSS sub-lets rooms to a large number of other community groups and there is currently a waiting list for rooms.

TCOSS is also a significant social services provider in the area of family, which TCOSS sees as a priority. It has contracts for services for various projects with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. The contracts for service include:

- Homebuilders family support service;
- Health coordinator;
- Antenatal Coordinator;
- Hearing therapist;
- Parenting programme/parent support;
- Social worker in schools; and
- Parents as First Teachers.

In addition, TCOSS was recently awarded a contract with the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services through the Department's Collaborative Initiatives Fund for Family Violence Prevention Services – Te Rito.

4.7.2 COSS Involvement in the Community Outcomes Process and Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)

Key stakeholder organisations, including TCOSS, contributed to the Community Outcomes process (COP) in 2004 by being invited to take part in focus groups. The COP involved a mix of new research methods and existing information such as: Council's existing Strategic Plan, State of the Environment Report, Leisure Strategy, Asset Management Plans and the District Plan. Key outcomes and community visions were extracted from these documents and drafted into a new series of Community Outcomes published in the LTCCP 2004/05.

New research was also conducted to check on current community concerns and the validity of the outcomes in Council's existing Strategic Plan. The research was intended to be a preliminary review of visions and outcomes. Two research methods were applied for this exercise: (1) two community-planning focus groups (involving wide community sector representation, facilitated in October 2003) were established by SWDC; and (2) a random community phone survey of 200 residents to explore these visions and outcomes.

The survey and focus group questions focused on:
- What are the main issues for the area?
- What should we do about them?
- How well are they being dealt with?

The questions also explored the advantages of living in the District. Focus group members were given an opportunity to develop a 'wish list' of goals or visions.

It was decided that the COP for the 2006 LTCCP firstly needed to identify the community's priorities. Therefore before the District Council and stakeholder organisations could begin exploring solutions and action plans, SWDC firstly needed to be clear about what the residents and ratepayers considered were the issues, outcomes and priorities.

SWDC has done this by conducting a community household survey. The survey provided the current outcomes for the community's comment, invited additions and changes, and asked the community to signal their priority areas from among these outcomes. The survey also explored residents' and ratepayers' perceptions of the strengths and issues of their area, their perceptions of the strengths and needs of different community sectors and aspirations regarding their community.

Targeted consultation was undertaken with Māori, Pacific peoples and youth. A hui and fono were held and a survey in text language was sent to all the High Schools. They have had almost a 100% response rate from the schools.

SWDC now have all the information in from these methods and the Council is probably going to decide not to integrate the outcomes identified by the different groups although similarities between them may be noted. There will probably be outcomes identified by the households, Māori, Pacific peoples and youth.

A needs summit was organised for the key stakeholders to present them with the information received, discuss the outcomes and decide on where to from here. This will include which stakeholder groups have responsibility for particular Community Outcomes. After it is expected that SWDC will need to develop area plans for each township (e.g. a Tokoroa Plan). A community steering group will be established to lead the process and administrative support will be provided by SWDC.

SWDC feels that the COP and LTCCP are bringing relationships to the forefront and that the District Council now needs a strategy for engaging with stakeholders. A key issue is to find the right ways to formalise partnerships with stakeholders. For some it might involve memoranda of understanding, while, for others, there may be different arrangements.

SWDC is developing a matrix framework to identify who is addressing what key issues and what monitoring and reporting is being undertaken. The District Council was made aware at the hui and fono that they need to report back in detail on what is happening.

TCOSS has been involved in the 2004 and now in the 2006 Community Outcomes process. A month ago they attended a hui which was facilitated by the SWDC Community Development Manager, a Māori District Councillor and an Iwi General Manager and took place on a marae. The hui was well-attended by Māori. TCOSS considered the hui to be very proactive and constructive and SWDC, through hui, such as this one, are gathering lots of information on the community and the environment.

4.7.3 What has Worked Well from the Perspective of TCOSS

TCOSS has a close and friendly relationship with the Council. Mayors at the SWDC have been community-minded. The manager of TCOSS has herself been a Councillor and so feels very comfortable going to the Council to speak to the Mayor and Councillors.

TCOSS believes that there is a realisation at the Council that TCOSS does a great job. They are accepted and respected in the community. TCOSS is considered the hub – 'all roads lead to TCOSS'. TCOSS also works very closely with Child Youth and Family and other government departments.

TCOSS believes that what the Council is doing under the COP is much better than what they have done in the past. SWDC and community groups, including those on TCOSS, are all becoming much closer. The District Council is prepared to sit down around a table and talk and seek advice.

4.7.4 What Has Not Worked So Well from the Perspective of TCOSS

There are some concerns about accountability and implementation. TCOSS believes that following the 2004 COP, not a lot of action was evident. At the recent hui for the 2006 process, SWDC were challenged to ensure there was more action following the community engagement and the release of Community Outcomes. SWDC was advised to report back to the community if they are not going to implement actions as planned and discussed during the course of community engagement.

5   SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

In this section we identify key themes that have emerged from both the survey and the case study data.

5.1   Diversity

The research highlights considerable diversity in the membership of the New Zealand Council of Social Services. In many respects such diversity is to be expected and welcomed given the diversity of our communities. Diversity is a feature of both the community and voluntary sector more generally and also of local government. Diversity of membership within NZCOSS leads to diversity in terms of capacity and capability to engage with local government. This is a function of their history, their resourcing and their volunteer base. Notwithstanding this diversity, a number of key themes emerged from both the data gathered in the survey and the case study research.

5.2   Historical Pattern of Relationships between the Local COSS and the City/District Council

The history of relationships is crucial to what happens in the present and future. Relationships are fluid and they wax and wane over time. They are dependent on a number of factors. A key factor is the presence of local authority Community Development staff who can liaise with the local community and voluntary sector and in particular, umbrella organisations like the local Council of Social Services. The case study research in particular highlighted the vital role played by Community Development staff.

A further key factor is the significant role played by those **local authority elected members** who recognise the contribution of the community and voluntary sector overall and in particular the role played by the local Council of Social Services. It is particularly important for local COSS to have the active support of, and strong connections with, Councillors and/or a Mayor who are respected and have credibility.

5.3   Local Authority Approach to Long-Term Planning

When the new planning processes were introduced it was expected that there would be considerable variation among local authorities with some recognising that the Community Outcomes Process presented a valuable opportunity to work collaboratively to promote social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being while others would make minimal change and conduct 'business as usual'. Involvement by local COSS in the Community Outcomes Process was very dependent on the type of local authority. Some understand their community, are creative in their approaches and are understanding of the type of involvement that parts of their community would like. COSS appreciate ease of input. Some local authorities had an overview of the process and a plan for community engagement and consultation. Others did not and sought input in somewhat

haphazard way. In this study, the size of the local authority was no clear predictor of effective COSS engagement.

Across local authorities there is great variation in capacity and willingness to take a strategic planning role and to do it in an inclusive and collaborative way. Some local authorities did not perceive any value or advantage of strategic planning. The short-term focus of elected members means that, notwithstanding the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 to promote well-being of the community in the future, they are likely to be more responsive to immediate issues and less likely to act strategically. Others in the community, such as Councils of Social Services, should be aware of the inherent tension for elected members between short-term action and achievements and long-term planning. Elected members themselves are keenly aware that they win or lose support depending on their short term behaviours and outcomes achieved.

Another aspect of the local authority approach is staff capacity and capability which vary greatly within a particular local authority and across the local government sector.

5.4 Aspirations and Capacity of Councils of Social Services

The research revealed that among the members of the New Zealand Council of Social Services there are quite widely differing aspirations for participation in the new local authority planning processes. Some COSS want to work collaboratively through the whole Community Outcomes Process (that is, from beginning to end - identification of outcomes, prioritisation, implementation, monitoring) while others were happy to play a lesser role – perhaps to respond when consulted. For many their aspirations are curtailed by their capacity. One COSS explicitly acknowledged the challenge that it faces with the ageing of its active members. This COSS recognised that a high proportion of its membership are women who are middle-aged and older (and ageing) and diminishing, and also mainly Pakeha. It is likely that many COSS face the same challenge of attracting young active members who reflect the ethnic make-up of the community. However it is also the case that some totally voluntary COSS, regardless of the demographic of their active membership, have the capacity and capability to be involved in the COP. This reflects the willingness of their volunteers to put in many hours of work.

The Ministry of Social Development has been particularly proactive in engaging with local authorities in their Community Outcomes Processes. Further, because Councils of Social Services are likely to have links with MSD, they may have gained additional awareness of the nature of the new planning processes through these social sector relationships. At the same time local authorities have evolving relationships with central government agencies in what is a new collaborative approach for both parties (an approach known as regionalism). There is still lack of clarity for many outside the central government and local government sector about what regionalism means for central government departments. Central government engagement with Community Outcomes Processes is still evolving but it is likely to have significant implications for

central government's activities at the regional and local level if the plans and activities of central government agencies are aligned with Community Outcomes as anticipated by the LGA 2002. It will be important to COSS to forge strong relationships with central government agencies at the regional and local level.

Because of the fluid situation arising from the relative newness of the COP and the evolving nature of relationships between local government and key stakeholders, it is important that COSS signal clearly their potential role as a key stakeholder and not simply assume that they will be engaged by their local authority.

Councils of Social Services are likely to have effective involvement in the Community Outcomes Process if they have credibility with, and respect from, their own members. This in turn usually means that the local authority respects the COSS and the issues that it raises. Credibility and respect are associated with such things as:

- A strong and wide representative membership base;

- A good understanding of the social needs of the area; and

- Willingness to act on members' wishes even if at times it may make the COSS relationship difficult with some organisations such as the local authority.

5.5 Factors that Enhanced the Community Outcomes Process for COSS Participants

From the research we have been able to identify a number of factors that contributed to positive experiences for COSS in their involvement in the new planning processes. These include:

- Independent facilitation of the Community Outcomes Process (rather than the local authority designing and facilitating the COP).

- Meaningful communication and dialogue rather than merely disseminating information.

- Councillors who are champions of community development.

- Councillors who have a sound understanding of the Community Outcomes Process, effective community engagement, and the new Act's sustainable development/well-being focus.

- A mayor who has broad community contacts and (ideally) who has knowledge of the Māori community and other key constituencies (including socially excluded groups).

- A wise and knowledgeable Co-ordinator and/or Chair and/or Manager/Executive Director of the COSS. (Such a person will be likely to be politically astute, financially capable and able to get things done through their own organisation and through others.)

- Not reliant on a single funding base.

5.6 Summary

In the course of the research, which involved talking to both COSS members and local authority staff we found that sometimes the two parties seemed to be talking past each other or not realising the other's constraints and issues. The risk of talking past each other can be avoided or lessened through regular communication. This means making the time to meet and exchange information. The Department of Internal Affairs as the central government agency responsible for the Local Government Act 2002, and the local government sector, should ensure that information about the planning processes is available in a timely way and in a format that is easily understood.

In summary, the research shows that Councils of Social Services and equivalent networks of social services organisations play a vital role in assisting local authorities to effectively engage the social sector, to identify priorities for promoting social well-being in the community, and to develop appropriate actions to achieve Community Outcomes. It is vitally important that social services organisations are aware of the importance of this process and are able to participate effectively.

6   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the future the way COPs are conducted is likely to be somewhat different as local authorities will be building on their initial experiences with their first Community Outcomes Process and hopefully learning from evolving good practice. We consider that Councils of Social Services, as an umbrella organisation of social sector non-government organisations at the local level, have a significant role to play as a key stakeholder in City/District Council Community Outcomes Processes.

Recommendation 1

We **recommend** that the New Zealand Council of Social Services ensures that local COSS have good information about the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to the Community Outcomes Process and LTCCP. This might be done through the NZCOSS website, regional seminars, conference presentations, and print materials (e.g. specialist publications) which can also be made available electronically. In addition, it is important to ensure that all local COSS are aware of the *KnowHow Guide to Decisionmaking Under the Local Government Act 2002* (New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers *et al*., 2003) and the Ministry of Social Development's *Good Practice Guide for Working with Local Government* (Ministry of Social Development, 2005).[6]

Recommendation 2

We **recommend** that the New Zealand Council of Social Services work closely with their members to assist them to build and maintain linkages with local authority staff who are responsible for designing the Community Outcomes Process and implementation of Community Outcomes.

It is difficult to know if there will be convergence in the timing of local authority COPs (e.g. more alignment between COPs in adjacent authorities or between regional COPs and COPs of the authorities within a region). To date, there has been very little alignment with local authorities starting their COP at different times and progressing at different rates. In the future there may be greater prospects of co-ordination across a region or part of a region and more collaboration over consultation and monitoring. Such co-ordination would make the role of local COSS easier. In the meantime, local COSS should ensure that they are kept fully informed on where a local authority is at in terms of the planning cycle.

COSS can learn from the first phase in the planning cycle (identification of Community Outcomes) and apply that to the subsequent stages (prioritisation, implementation, alignment with the local authority's Long Term Council Community Plan and other organisations' activities and plans). In the latter half of 2005 local authorities will be preparing their Draft LTCCPs in which they will identify how they will contribute to Community Outcomes. They should also be engaging early with other key stakeholders

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[6] Two other useful publications with good practice examples are Burke (2004) and McKinlay (2005).

to ascertain the contribution of those stakeholders. The Draft LTCCP will be released for public consultation around March 2006. It will be important that organisations like COSS encourage local authorities to allocate appropriate funding to Community Outcomes.

Recommendation 3

We r**ecommend** that local COSS should develop and/or consolidate relationships with the City/District Council (both staff and elected members) and other key stakeholders especially in relation to Community Outcomes where the COSS has a key role itself or a particular role. One way to do this is to invite Councillors to meetings. It may also be beneficial if there is common ground to work with other sector organisations to have a united front on certain issues.

Recommendation 4

We also **recommend** that local COSS should also seek to develop strong relationships with key central government agencies.

The Ministry of Social Development is already working regionally and looking at further ways it can be involved at the local level. The Department of Internal Affairs has appointed regionally-based Relationship Managers whose task is to foster effective central government engagement in COPs. These people may also be a useful initial point of contact with the Department. Over time, it is likely that many more government agencies will have staff with a specific responsibility for linking with local government and the Community Outcomes process.

Recommendation 5

We **recommend** that NZCOSS make representations to relevant central government agencies and government Ministers for capacity-building funding for the community and voluntary sector in general, and social services NGOs in particular, to enhance their contribution to local authority long-term planning processes.

Nearly $800,000 was allocated to the Department of Internal Affairs in Vote: Local Government Vote: Community and Voluntary Sector (Budget 2005/06) for the facilitation of Central/Local Government engagement in the Community Outcomes Process. It is important that there is an appropriate level of funding for facilitation of community and voluntary sector engagement in the Community Outcomes Process. It may be appropriate to encourage the Ministry of Social Development to gather data on the resource needs of social services NGOs for participating in COPs. This could possibly be done as part of the Building Capability in the Community Sector Project that is being co-ordinated by the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector and the Family and Community Services of MSD.

A tool being developed by Gisborne District Council to record information and build a profile of each community organisations capability, capacity, aspirations, and phase of development should be considered for wider use by NZCOSS and its members, with adaptation as appropriate.

Recommendation 6

Finally, we **recommend** that NZCOSS work with other national umbrella groups of social sector organisations to develop an infrastructure that can support local social service NGOs and other community and voluntary sector organisations to be effective participants in local authority long-term planning processes. This would also need to include supporting the establishment of social services networks or local Councils of Social Services in those areas where such networks do not currently exist or function. The concept of a Community Sector Council developed by GISCOSS, which could either evolve from the current COSS structure or incorporate the existing COSS/social services network as well as other community and voluntary sector organisations, might offer a model for local networking. A Community Sector Council would also assist in developing a co-ordinated contribution to the on-going task of Community Outcomes implementation and monitoring as well as to future Community Outcomes processes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Sections from the Local Government Act 2002

82 Principles of consultation

(1) Consultation that a local authority undertakes in relation to any decision or other matter must be undertaken, subject to subsections (3) to (5), in accordance with the following principles:

(a) that persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be provided by the local authority with reasonable access to relevant information in a manner and format that is appropriate to the preferences and needs of those persons:

(b) that persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be encouraged by the local authority to present their views to the local authority:

(c) that persons who are invited or encouraged to present their views to the local authority should be given clear information by the local authority concerning the purpose of the consultation and the scope of the decisions to be taken following the consideration of views presented:

(d) that persons who wish to have their views on the decision or matter considered by the local authority should be provided by the local authority with a reasonable opportunity to present those views to the local authority in a manner and format that is appropriate to the preferences and needs of those persons:

(e) that the views presented to the local authority should be received by the local authority with an open mind and should be given by the local authority, in making a decision, due consideration:

(f) that persons who present views to the local authority should be provided by the local authority with information concerning both the relevant decisions and the reasons for those decisions.

(2) A local authority must ensure that it has in place processes for consulting with Māori in accordance with subsection (1).

(3) The principles set out in subsection (1) are, subject to subsections (4) and (5), to be observed by a local authority in such manner as the local authority considers, in its discretion, to be appropriate in any particular instance.

(4)   A local authority must, in exercising its discretion under subsection (3), have regard to---

     (a)   the requirements of section 78; and

     (b)   the extent to which the current views and preferences of persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter are known to the local authority; and

     (c)   the nature and significance of the decision or matter, including its likely impact from the perspective of the persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter; and

     (d)   the provisions of Part I of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (which Part, among other things, sets out the circumstances in which there is good reason for withholding local authority information); and

     (e)   the costs and benefits of any consultation process or procedure.

(5)   Where a local authority is authorised or required by this Act or any other enactment to undertake consultation in relation to any decision or matter and the procedure in respect of that consultation is prescribed by this Act or any other enactment, such of the provisions of the principles set out in subsection (1) as are inconsistent with specific requirements of the procedure so prescribed are not to be observed by the local authority in respect of that consultation.

91 Process for identifying community outcomes

(1) A local authority must, not less than once every 6 years, carry out a process to identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of its district or region.

(2) The purposes of the identification of community outcomes are---

(a) to provide opportunities for communities to discuss their desired outcomes in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community; and

(b) to allow communities to discuss the relative importance and priorities of identified outcomes to the present and future social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community; and

(c) to provide scope to measure progress towards the achievement of community outcomes; and

(d) to promote the better co-ordination and application of community resources; and

(e) to inform and guide the setting of priorities in relation to the activities of the local authority and other organisations.

(3) A local authority may decide for itself the process that it is to use to facilitate the identification of community outcomes under subsection (1), but the local authority---

(a) must, before finally deciding on that process, take steps---

(i) to identify, so far as practicable, other organisations and groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes; and

(ii) to secure, if practicable, the agreement of those organisations and groups to the process and to the relationship of the process to any existing and related plans; and

(b) must ensure that the process encourages the public to contribute to the identification of community outcomes.

93 Long-term council community plan

(1)   A local authority must, at all times, have a long-term council community plan under this section.

(2)   A local authority must use the special consultative procedure in adopting a long-term council community plan.

(3)   A long-term council community plan must be adopted before the commencement of the first year to which it relates, and continues in force until the close of the third consecutive year to which it relates.

(4)   A local authority may amend a long-term council community plan at any time.

(5)   A local authority must use the special consultative procedure in making any amendment to a long-term council community plan.

(6)   The purpose of a long-term council community plan is to---

   (a)   describe the activities of the local authority; and

   (b)   describe the community outcomes of the local authority's district or region; and

   (c)   provide integrated decision-making and co-ordination of the resources of the local authority; and

   (d)   provide a long-term focus for the decisions and activities of the local authority; and

   (e)   provide a basis for accountability of the local authority to the community; and

   (f)   provide an opportunity for participation by the public in decision-making processes on activities to be undertaken by the local authority.

(7)   A long-term council community plan adopted under this section must---

   (a)   cover a period of not less than 10 consecutive financial years; and

   (b)   include the information required by Part 1 of Schedule 10.

(8)   A local authority must, in complying with the requirements of this Act in relation to the preparation and adoption of a long-term council community plan, act in such

manner, and include in that plan such detail, as the local authority considers on reasonable grounds to be appropriate.

(9)   A local authority must, in deciding what is appropriate for the purposes of subsection (4), have regard to---

    (a)   the provisions of sections 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 96, 97, and 101; and

    (b)   the significance of any matter; and

    (c)   the extent of the local authority's resources.

(10)   A local authority must, within 1 month after the adoption of its long-term council community plan,---

    (a)   make its long-term council community plan publicly available; and

    (b)   send copies of that plan to---

        (i) the Secretary; and

        (ii)the Auditor-General; and

        (iii) the Parliamentary Library.

Appendix 2: Survey Form

New Zealand Council Of Social Services
Te Kaunihera Ratonga Tauwhiro O Aotearoa

Local Government Mapping Project

Information Sheet

The Local Government Act 2002 includes new planning processes which encourage councils and communities to work together to achieve well-being. In particular the Long Term Council Community Planning process provides an exciting opportunity for local Councils of Social Services (COSS) to work in partnership with local government to achieve social well-being. Local COSS are ideally placed to facilitate linkages between the social sector organisations in each community and the local authority to identify community outcomes and work with the social sector and local government to achieve community outcomes.

The New Zealand Council of Social Services would like to assist local COSS to participate effectively in the Community Outcomes Process and the processes associated with the development and implementation of the Long Term Council Community Plan. The aim of this survey is to gather data about what is happening in different communities around New Zealand. The results will enable NZCOSS to identify what support is needed by local COSS to assist the development of local relationships. We would appreciate your response to this survey. It should take no more than 30 minutes.

As well as the survey the research involves more detailed analysis of a small number of case studies of different local Councils of Social Services and their relationships with local authorities.

We are conducting this research on behalf of NZCOSS. Your participation in the survey is voluntary. This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently it has not been reviewed by Massey University's Human Ethics Committee. The researchers named below are responsible for the ethical conduct of the research If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researchers please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics and Equity) telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz

You are most welcome to add any further information and to contact us if you would like further information or assistance.

Please send your completed questionnaire to Karen Johnston by email, fax or post by **16 June 2005**.

Contact details:

Karen Johnston
Email: karen@distill.co.nz
Ph: 03 9615018
Fax: 03 353 0247 (**attention Karen Johnston**)
PO Box 1142
Christchurch

Christine Cheyne
Email: C.M.Cheyne@massey.ac.nz
Ph: 06 350-5799 ext 2816

New Zealand Council Of Social Services
Te Kaunihera Ratonga Tauwhiro O Aotearoa

Local Government Mapping Project
Survey of Local Councils of Social Services

Survey Recipients PLEASE NOTE:

Assistance to answer questionnaire electronically:

Save this document. Fill it out, save again and then re-attach to your email when replying.

Type your answers in the boxes beside the questions.

Place an 'x' beside the most applicable option.

Don't worry about changes in layout or page length when you are filling out this questionnaire

Please do not hesitate to contact Karen if there are any questions.

Part 1

First we would like some information about your organisation:

1. What is the name of your organisation?	[v1]	
2. Please describe the area that is covered by your organisation (the approximate boundaries) – e.g. *all of the x City/District Council, mainly the [part of] x City/District Council, the towns of …*. Please give us as much information as possible so that we can map your area.	[v2]	
3. Which City or District Councils do you mainly deal with?	[v3]	
4. What are the main activities that your organisation undertakes? [List up to 4 activities.]	[v4]	
	[v5]	
	[v6]	
	[v7]	
5. What other activities would your organisation like to be involved in, given sufficient time and funding? [List up to 3 activities.]	[v8]	
	[v9]	
	[v10]	
6. What do you consider to be the main strengths of your organisation? [List up to 3 activities.]	[v11]	
	[v12]	
	[v13]	
7. Does your COSS have a Board or Committee	[v14]	Yes	No

Question	Code		
8. If yes, does the Board/Committee have a terms of reference or constitution?	[v15]	Yes	No
9. What is the approximate number of local social sector organisations that are part of your Council/Group network?	[v16]		
10. Are there other parts of the community/community groups/agencies that are not part of your network that you would like to include?	[v17]	Yes	No
11. If so, can you list up to 3 organisations.	[v18]		
	[v19]		
	[v20]		
12. Do you have any relationships with Māori/Iwi?	[v21]	Yes	No
13. If yes, what type of involvement do you have?	[v22]		
14. Do you work closely with any other COSS organisations?	[v23]	Yes	No
15. If yes, what type of involvement do you have?	[v24]		
16. If yes, please list the 3 you work most closely with.	[v25]		
	[v26]		
	[v27]		

Question		Yes	No
17. Could you please list some of the key local organisations with which you have important working relationships. You can list up to 8 but you don't need to list that many. These can be any kind of organisation including local authority, government department, iwi, other community groups	[v28]		
	[v29]		
	[v30]		
	[v31]		
	[v32]		
	[v33]		
	[v34]		
	[v35]		
18. Does your COSS have a paid co-ordinator?	[v36]	Yes	No
19. If yes, approximately how many hours per week in total is worked by this co-ordinator?	[v37]		
20. Are there any other paid staff?	[v38]	Yes	No
21. If yes, how many?	[v39]		
22. Approximately how many hours per week in total are worked by these other paid staff?	[v40]		

Part 2

Now we would like to find out about current and recent linkages with your city/district council.

Question	Code					
23. Did your organisation make submissions as part of the annual planning process prior to 2003?	[v41]	Never/ hardly ever		Sometimes		Very often/ Regularly
24. Prior to 2003 was your organisation involved in any strategic planning activity carried out by your local authority?	[v42]	Never/ hardly ever		Sometimes		Very often/ Regularly
25. Have you been involved in your city/district's Community Outcomes Process (introduced by the Local Government Act 2002)?	[v43]	Yes		No		Don't know/not sure
26. If yes, how would you rate your involvement? (please mark the box that best fits your experience)	[v44]	Not that worthwhile		OK		Very worthwhile
27. Please add any comments you wish to make about your involvement in your city/district's Community Outcomes Process.	[v45]					
28. All councils had to adopt a transitional Long Term Council Community Plan in 2003 or 2004. Did you make a submission on that Long Term Council Community Plan?	[v46]	Yes		No		Don't know/not sure
29. All councils are required to adopt a full Long Term Council Community Plan in 2006. Have you received information about the development of the full Long Term Council Community Plan?	[v47]	Yes		No		Don't know/not sure
30. How adequate do you find the information provided by your local city/district council about the Long Term Council Community Planning process?	[v48]	Not very adequate	OK	Fairly good	Excellent	
31. In general, how would you rate your relationship with the local city/district council?	[v49]	Non-existent	Weak	OK	Fairly good	Excellent	Don't know
32. If you have a 'fairly good' or 'excellent' working relationship with your local District or City Council in terms of the Community Outcome process or Long Term Council Community Plan why do you think that is?	[v50]					
33. If you have a 'weak' or 'non-existent' working relationship with your local District or City Council in terms of the Community Outcome process or Long Term Council Community Plan why do you think that is?	[v51]					

Part 3

Now we are interested in your local COSS's contribution to local government's new planning processes. We are interested in what you see as your organisation's strengths and where further support and development might be useful.

34. What do you consider are two key benefits for your local council from COSS involvement in the Community Outcome Process and Long Term Council Community Plan?	**[v52]**	
	[v53]	
35. What has been the most positive aspect for you of the Community Outcomes Process in your area?	**[v54]**	
36. Are there aspects of your involvement in local authority planning processes (especially the Community Outcome Process and Long Term Council Community Plan) that you think could be improved?	**[v55]**	Yes	No
37. If yes, please explain.	**[v56]**	

Appendix 3: Questionnaire Respondents

Alexandra COSS
Ashburton COSS
Auckland District COSS
Buller REAP
Cambridge
Christchurch COSS
Colville Social Services Collective
Dunedin COSS
Family Focus Centre, Greymouth
Feilding Social Issues Network (SINCOSS)
Franklin COSS
Gisborne East Coast COSS
Kaiapoi Community Services
Kaitaia
Kauri Trust Youth Services
Marlborough Community Workers
Matamata COSS
North Shore Community and Social Services
Otorohanga Support House
Pacific Island Cultural Social Services Trust
Palmerston North Community Services Council
Putaruru COSS
Southland Regional Support Group
Taupo COSS
Tokoroa COSS
Waiheke COSS
Wellington COSS
West Auckland District COSS
Whangarei COSS
Whitianga Community Services Trust

Appendix 4: Case Study Interview Guidelines

New Zealand Council Of Social Services
Te Kaunihera Ratonga Tauwhiro O Aotearoa

Local Government Mapping Project

COSS Information Sheet

The Local Government Act 2002 includes new planning processes which encourage councils and communities to work together to achieve well-being. In particular the Long Term Council Community Planning process provides an exciting opportunity for local Councils of Social Services (COSS) to work in partnership with local government to achieve social well-being. Local COSS are ideally placed to facilitate linkages between the social sector organisations in each community and the local authority to identify community outcomes and work with the social sector and local government to achieve community outcomes.

The New Zealand Council of Social Services would like to assist local COSS to participate effectively in the Community Outcomes Process and the processes associated with the development and implementation of the Long Term Council Community Plan. As well as the questionnaire that has been sent to the local COSS we are conducting case study research involving several local Councils of Social Services. The aim of this research is to build a bigger picture of local COSS participation in the COP in different communities around New Zealand. The results will enable NZCOSS to identify what support is needed by local COSS to assist the development of local relationships. The interview will take about an hour.

We are conducting this research on behalf of NZCOSS. Your participation in the survey is voluntary.

Date of Interview   **Place of Interview**

Name of COSS:

Name of person interviewed:

Contact Details:

General overview of COSS
What is the governance and management structure for your COSS?

What is the approximate number of local social sector organisations that are part of the local COSS and which groups are the most active members?

What are your key activities?

What are the main contacts that you normally have with your local Council (outside of COP)?

Does the Council have any involvement in your COSS?

Does your local authority provide any financial or other inkind support to the COSS?

Are there other parts of the social sector that you think should be more involved with the COSS?

Does the COSS have involvement or a relationship with local Mãori (iwi or other)?

If your contact person within the Council left would the relationship with the Council be detrimentally affected in any way? How have you coped with changes at the Council in the past?

Community Outcomes Process and LTCCP
Can you give me a brief overview of the COP that your local authority has conducted.

What contacts have you had with the Council as part of the COP?

How well do you think your COSS has been involved in the COP?

How well do you think your Council has involved the social sector in general in the COP (compared with other sectors e.g. environmental sector, economic stakeholders)?

Are there ways in which the COSS could be more fully involved in the COP and LTCCP processes?

Are there other parts of the social sector that you think should be more involved in the COP?

Does the COSS usually make submissions to the Council's draft annual plan process?

What do you see as the positive aspects/advantages of local COSS involvement in the COP and LTCCP processes?

How can this be enhanced?

What advice would you give a new COSS that was establishing in terms of its relationship with a District or City Council?

How have you found out about the new LGAct. Has anyone explained it to you and your role?

What means do you use to get your voice heard at the Council? What has been the most effective?

Any other questions/comments?

www.nzcoss.org.nz
a collective voice supporting local communities