Principal Report
Evaluating the Department of Internal Affairs’ Facilitation of the Central / Local Government Interface in the Community Outcomes Process

Department of Internal Affairs

5 April 2007
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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The community outcomes process was introduced by the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 of the Act requires local government to facilitate a process with their communities, at least every six years, to identify community outcomes. Local authorities are required to facilitate a process so communities, (including central government agencies and businesses), can identify and promote community outcomes.

Central government agencies have no legislated requirement to engage in the identification and promotion of community outcomes, although government policy does encourage this engagement where there are mutually desirable outcomes.

In 2004, Cabinet directed the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) to facilitate the central and local government interface in the community outcomes process to overcome potential barriers to engagement. The Cabinet paper outlines specific initiatives or requirements to be implemented by the Department in this role.

Cabinet also directed the Department to monitor and evaluate their facilitation of the central and local government interface. The results of this evaluation will inform the report to the Cabinet Committee on Government Expenditure and Administration by December 2006, as well as the future strategic and operational direction of the Department’s facilitation role.

Litmus was engaged by the Department to undertake the evaluation of its facilitation role from 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2006.

1.2 Evaluation objectives

The three high level objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Describe the implementation of the Department’s role and central government agencies’ engagement with the role
- Assess the short-term impacts of the Department’s role
- Consider the focus of the Department’s facilitation function, given the current status of the community outcomes process and the future needs of the sector.

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1 Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15, paragraph 8 summarised in section 3.2.1.
1.3 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was completed between August and September 2006 and compromised four key components:

- Internal stakeholder discussions, which resulted in the development and sign-off of an evaluation plan and draft intervention logic
- Analysis of documentation provided by the Department
- Indepth interviews with 23 participants from 17 central government agencies and national bodies of local government
- Eight local government case studies involving 30 indepth interviews across 24 local authorities, and 13 interviews with regionally based participants from six central government agencies.

1.4 Evaluation findings

1.4.1 The Department’s roles and initiatives and delivery to Cabinet paper

Commencing in November 2004, the Department’s Local Government and Community Branch established the interface team to facilitate the central and local government interface around the community outcomes process. The interface team consists of:

- The Director of Operations responsible for strategic overview and management of the interface team
- An information broker responsible for establishing infrastructure to enable an up-to-date flow of information to support central and local government, and to promote opportunities for central government involvement in the community outcomes process
- Four relationship managers responsible for facilitating engagement between central and local government, with an overall focus of identifying and responding to issues and trends in the community outcomes process
- A policy analyst responsible for gathering and analysing information about the interface to assist in planning, developing, interpreting and reviewing of relevant policy
- A support officer assisting with relevant administrative matters.

The interface team implemented a number of initiatives that align with the Cabinet paper to facilitate the central and local government interface in the community outcomes process: Central Government Interagency Group; SEEC5; www.localcentral.govt.nz; annual workshops; monitoring and reporting seminars; an e-discussion group; and communications materials.

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SEEC5 stands for the four wellbeings of social, economic, environment and culture, with the 5 representing the four wellbeing agencies plus the Department.
Positively, the Department has, in the main, delivered the prescribed requirements in paragraph 8 of the 2004 Cabinet paper by:

- Providing information to central government about the Act through the Central Government Interagency Group and other communication channels
- Establishing the directory for local government of central government information and contacts: www.localcentral.govt.nz
- Providing, via relationship managers, a contact point for local government to indicate problems or opportunities
- Establishing mechanisms for central government to share good practice and overcome difficulties (via Central Government Interagency Group, annual workshops, website, and relationship managers)

To a lesser extent, the Department:

- Offers suggestions to central government agencies on their engagement in the community outcomes process. Suggestions to central government agencies have been reactive, driven by meeting local government’s needs identified by the Department’s relationship managers
- Collates central government involvement in the community outcomes process via Central Government Interagency Group’s minutes. However, the contribution of systematically collating central government involvement in the community outcomes process is unclear in the wider purpose of facilitating central and local government engagement.

1.4.2 Short-term impacts: central government

Four short-term impacts were identified for central government attributable to the activities of the Department over the last 18 months, specifically:

1. Connecting: Relationship managers have created a sense of connection between 21 central government agencies and the community outcomes processes through their attendance at national and regional forums. The Department has also connected at least 12 central government agencies, to varying degrees, with local authorities to meet the identified needs

2. Creating relevance: The Department has a critical role in demonstrating to central government agencies the relevance of the community outcomes process. There has been limited success in this area for the Department, as at least 14 central government agencies appear to perceive little relevance in, or are not engaged in the community outcomes process. Given the Department’s limited capacity, and the lack of demand from local government, the Department has not sought to address systematically the reasons these agencies are not engaging

3. Smoothing engagement: Relationship managers have eased or assisted a number of central government agencies to work with local government and have encouraged
and supported the engagement process through offering advice, assistance and resources

4. Sharing good practice learnings: Relationship managers are gathering and disseminating examples of good practice about differing community outcomes processes, and central and local government engagement amongst central government. There is limited evidence that this is resulting in changed practices within central government agencies. However, it is likely that over time this information sharing will enhance central government agencies’ understanding about community outcomes, therefore creating a foundation in which community outcomes may become more embedded within central government processes.

Overall, the Department has achieved some targeted success in improving central government engagement in the community outcomes process. Further gains may be achieved using a more strategic approach to identify the central government agencies who should be engaging through the identification of mutually beneficial community outcomes and by addressing, if possible, their underlying reasons for not engaging.

1.4.3 Short-term impacts: local government

Four short-term impacts were identified for local government, with a slightly different emphasis due to local government’s legislated responsibility for community outcomes, specifically:

1. Connecting: Relationship managers through their interactions with local authorities have identified opportunities for central government engagement to meet local authorities’ needs. Local authorities are not, however, always ready to interact with central government agencies and have at times rejected the Department’s suggested engagement proposals. Within six of the eight local government case studies, the Department has connected local authorities to central government to meet their monitoring and reporting needs, to help with specific initiatives, or simply to make introductions

2. Creating relevance: Relationship managers are creating relevance for local government at two levels. Firstly, through strategic advice and guidance at regional forums, relationship managers are assisting local government on remaining focused on the wider intent of the community outcomes process. Secondly, the Department, to a more limited extent, is creating greater understanding of the role, responsibilities and accountabilities of central government and the contribution they can make. Amongst local government, there continues to be some confusion about the role of central government agencies in the community outcomes process

3. Smoothing engagement: Relationship managers are smoothing engagement between local and central government. In the main, these relationships are at the formative development stage

4. Sharing good practice learnings: Relationship managers are active in seeking and sharing examples of good practice amongst local government. There is some evidence that this is reducing duplication of effort across local government.
Within the constraints of its operating environment, (i.e. late establishment, short duration for action, and variation in local government need), the Department has achieved a level of success in identifying local government need and engaging appropriate central government agencies to meet this need. However, ongoing local government’s expectations of central government require management to build a common understanding of goals and priorities.

1.4.4 Contribution to long-term benefits

Given the formative stage of the community outcomes process, it is, in the main, too early to see the emergence of the desired long-term benefits of engagement between central and local government, (i.e. better understanding of each others goals and constraints, progressed community outcomes, improved policy development, efficient use of public resources, and reduced compliance costs). However, the Department has facilitated a level of interaction between central and local government which has established a foundation for future engagement to assist in their realisation.

1.4.5 Future focus

Over the next 12 months, the future needs of local and central government are defined primarily by the community outcomes process entering a new phase.

Central government’s future needs

Looking to the next 12 months of the community outcomes process, central government participants see a need for:

- Reviewing the first full community outcomes process across the country
- Focusing on action planning
- Monitoring and reporting assistance to local government.

Future needs for central government in seeking to engage with local government are:

- Better understanding and awareness of central government agencies’ roles
- Avoiding duplication of effort
- Enhancing awareness and understanding of how local government needs and community outcomes align with central government agencies’ strategic direction and work plans.

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3 The stage of the community outcomes is described in this report as formative as only one full round of community outcomes identification has been completed, and local government are just commencing initiatives to promote and realise them.
Local government’s future needs

For local government participants future needs in the community outcomes process relate to:

- Clarifying the level of focus in the community outcomes going forward, (i.e. local, sub-regional, or regional)
- Promoting to their communities the role and responsibility of local authorities in community outcomes
- Prioritising community outcomes and developing actions plans to demonstrate progress
- Providing monitoring and reporting support.

In seeking to engage with central government future needs are:

- Greater understanding by central government of their roles in community outcomes
- Continuing to connect with central government agencies
- Ongoing sharing of good practice
- Seeking to avoid ‘consultation overload’.

The Department’s future role

Over the next 12 months, local and central government participants perceive the Department’s facilitation role to be important in:

- Maintaining focus and momentum on the community outcomes process for local and central government
- Offering guidance and advice in the new phase of the community outcomes process
- Developing more shared understanding of each other goals and constraints
- Facilitating the process of connecting, creating relevance and smoothing engagement
- Sharing good practice and learnings.

1.5 Conclusions

The following key conclusions are drawn from the evaluation findings:

- Delivered to the Cabinet paper: Over the last 18 months, the Department established and maintained the roles and initiatives prescribed in the Cabinet Paper to facilitate the central and local government interface regarding community outcomes.
- Critical role: The Department’s role is perceived as critical to maintaining a focus on community outcomes, connecting central and local government at a local regional and national level (i.e. fostering ‘new greenfields’ connections), and gathering and sharing practice, learnings and information about community outcomes across New Zealand.
Relationship managers are pivotal: The relationship managers are perceived by both central and local government participants as the driver of the Department’s role.

Short-term impacts emerging:
- For central government agencies, the Department has created awareness of the community outcomes process for some central government agencies attending the Central Government Interagency Group, and regional forums
- The Department is acknowledged as assisting local government to meet their legislated requirements of the community outcomes process through targeted engagement with central government primarily around auditing and monitoring
- Across both central and local government, the Department has shared information about the community outcomes processes occurring across New Zealand resulting in a reduction of the duplication in effort for local government
- The Department, through its connecting of central and local government, has laid the foundations for future engagement between local and central government in relation to the promotion of community outcomes.

Future need for the Department’s role. Many central and local government participants note the need for the Department’s role, as the community outcomes process enters a new phase. It also reflects that community outcomes are not embedded into central and local government strategy and planning processes.

Clarify role and approach: To enhance delivery of short-term impacts, there is a need to ensure the Department’s role is clearly defined and promoted. Specifically, the Department needs to consider the boundaries of the role, (i.e. a facilitator of engagement or more directly involved in community outcomes projects).
2. Evaluation Overview

This section provides an overview of the evaluation undertaken, its background, objectives, methods, and scope.

2.1 Evaluation background

The Local Government Act 2002 (the Act) requires local government to identify and promote community outcomes by working collaboratively with their community, businesses, central government agencies and other organisations. In contrast, central government agencies are not legislatively required to do this. However, government policy does encourage central government to work with local government to achieve mutually desirable community outcomes.

Cabinet directed the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department) to facilitate the central / local government interface in the community outcomes process. Commencing in November 2004, the Department’s Local Government and Community Branch under Operations established a number of roles and initiatives to facilitate this interface. This includes an interface team consisting of:

- The Director of Operations offering strategic overview and management
- Four relationship managers brokering and facilitating central and local government, at a local, regional and national level
- An information broker establishing and managing infrastructure to support the flow of up-to-date information between central and local government
- A policy analyst gathering and analysing information about the interface to assist in planning, developing, interpreting and reviewing relevant policy.

The interface team support the following initiatives:

- A website – www.localcentral.govt.nz – containing information and contacts about central and local government
- An annual workshop facilitating discussions between central and local government on the community outcomes process
- A forum of central government agencies - Central Government Interagency Group - discussing engagement with local government on community outcomes
- Other supporting communication mechanisms encouraging central and local government engagement on community outcomes including newsletters, an e-mail discussion group, and regional seminars.

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*Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15 summarised in section 3.2.1.*
2.2 Evaluation rationale

Cabinet directed the Department, in conjunction with the State Services Commission and Treasury, to monitor and evaluate the facilitation of the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes process.

The results of this evaluation will inform the report to the Cabinet Committee on Government Expenditure and Administration in December 2006, as well as the future strategic and operational direction of the Department’s facilitation role.

2.3 Evaluation objectives

Focusing on the period from 1 January 2005 to 30 June 2006, the three high level evaluation objectives were to:

1. Describe the implementation of the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes process, and central government agencies’ engagement with the Department in this role
2. Assess the short-term impacts of the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes process
3. Consider the focus of the Department’s facilitation function, given the current status of the community outcomes process and the future needs of the sector.

The analytical framework for this evaluation focuses on two levels:

- Services: the implementation of the roles and initiatives established by the Department to facilitate the central and local government interface and their effectiveness
- Overall function: the identification of short-term impacts, attributable to the Department, of central and local government working together on the identification and promotion of community outcomes.

Appendix 1 details the evaluation sub-objectives and research questions.

2.4 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation comprised four key components as outlined below:

1. Internal stakeholder discussions

Litmus undertook two workshops and 11 interviews with internal stakeholders including the interface team, to gain an understanding of:

- The Act in relation to central and local government and the community outcomes process

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5 See appendix 2.1 for list of internal stakeholders.
The establishment and evolution of the Department’s facilitation role focusing on the interface team and supporting services

Potential short-term impacts identified from the Department’s facilitation of the central and local government interface.

Following these discussions, an evaluation plan and the draft intervention logic were developed and signed off by the Department. Appendix 2.3 contains the draft intervention logic that underpins the short-term impact assessment.

2. Analysis of documentation

Litmus reviewed and analysed documents provided by the Department to catalogue the development of the facilitation role including the interface team and supporting services, the level and type of interaction with central and local government, and the Department’s achievements and challenges in facilitating this interface.

3. Central government agency interviews

In-depth interviews with central government participants explored:

- Interactions with the Department in facilitating their engagement with local government in the community outcomes process, and its impact
- Future needs of central government agencies in relation to community outcomes, and the Department’s role in meeting these needs.

Central government agencies were selected reflecting their national role, responsibility or linkages to local government and the community outcomes process, as well as involvement in the Department’s initiatives for central government agencies.

Litmus interviewed 23 participants from 17 central government agencies and national bodies of local government, including:

- 4 wellbeing agencies
- 4 central agencies
- 2 national bodies for local government
- 7 other central government agencies.

Interviews were conducted between 14 August and 1 September 2006.

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6 See appendix 2.2 for types of documents reviewed.
7 See appendix 2.4 for table listing the central government agencies who participated.
4. Local government case studies

A case study approach was used to gain a 360° input from local government and central government staff based locally and regionally focusing on their:

- Interactions with the Department in facilitating central and local government to work together in the community outcomes process over the last 18 months
- Future needs of the local government sector in relation to their community outcomes, and the Department’s role in meeting these needs.

The case study summaries also draw from supporting literature on demography, the community outcomes process, and from local government Long-Term Council Community Plans.

Cases were selected to offer a mix of:

- Geography, (i.e. urban, provincial and rural)
- Local and regional community outcomes processes, (i.e. a local authority undertaking the development of their community outcomes independently versus a collective of local and regional authorities developing regional community outcomes)
- Engagement with the Department, (i.e. significant to minimal engagement)
- Size of local authority, (i.e. small, medium, large)
- Relationship managers, (i.e. South Island, lower North Island, central North Island and northern)
- Perceptions of contribution by the Department to central and local government working together on community outcomes, (i.e. a significant contribution to minimal).

The following eight local government cases were selected:

1. Our Way Southland
2. Canterbury Community Plans Group
3. Rangitikei District Council
4. Future Taranaki
5. Choosing Futures Waikato
6. Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty (COBOP)
7. Manukau City Council
8. Waitakere City Council.

Litmus conducted:

- 30 interviews with local government participants across 24 local authorities – representing over a quarter of the 85 local authorities in New Zealand
13 interviews with participants from 6 central government agencies based regionally. Interviews were conducted between 21 August and 12 September 2006, and three to six people were interviewed per case.

Appendix 2.5 details the recruitment specification and interviews conducted for each case. Appendix 4 contains the research tools.

2.5 Evaluation scope

The information and data available to address the evaluation objectives are primarily qualitative in nature. Litmus has undertaken a thematic analysis of the qualitative information to identify emerging themes, and to elicit differences across sub-groups. We have also corroborated themes emerging through triangulation of interviews, as well as analysis of secondary data and documents.

The evaluation findings are therefore indicative and not definitive. That is, we are unable to categorically say whether or not the themes noted throughout the report are held by all central and local government that have interacted with the Department’s facilitation role, or the strength of views held.

Litmus is, however, confident that this report accurately represents the views and perceptions of participants who contributed to this evaluation.

2.6 Report structure

The report is structured as follows:

Objective 1: Services: Evaluating the Department’s Roles and Initiatives and Delivery to Cabinet Paper

- **Section 3: Context** - describes the relevant sections of the Act in relation to the community outcomes process, the need to facilitate the central and local government interface, and the Cabinet response to this need.
- **Section 4: Implementation** - describes and assesses individually the roles and initiatives that constitute the Department’s facilitation of the central and local government interface, and discusses perceptions of the role in its entirety.
- **Section 5: Delivery to Cabinet Paper** - assesses the extent to which the Department and the central government agencies have met Cabinet requirements.

Objective 2: Overall function: Identifying the Short-Term Impacts Attributable to the Department’s Facilitation Role

- **Section 6: Operating Environment** - describes the environment in which the Department is seeking to facilitate central and local government to work together. It offers an overview of the complexity and multi-levelled nature of potential engagements, the variation in need and perceived challenges of facilitating this engagement, as well as the implications of the presence of other facilitators.
Section 7: Short-term impacts for Central Government - details those impacts attributable to the Department’s facilitation of engagement with local government in the community outcomes process.

Section 8: Short-term impacts for Local Government - details those impacts attributable to the Department’s facilitation of engagement with central government in the community outcomes process.

Objective 3: Future Focus of the Department’s Facilitation Role

Section 9: Future directions - details the focus and needs of central and local government in relation to the promotion of community outcomes over the next 12 months.

Conclusions

Section 10: Conclusions - details the overarching findings of the evaluation.

Report notes:

1. As this report draws primarily from qualitative data, the words: ‘many’ and ‘some’ have been used to weight participants’ feedback. To avoid confusion:
   - Many refers to a majority of participants making the comment
   - Some indicates that the comment was not made by the majority but by at least 3 participants.

2. Each chapter contains intro and outro text boxes:
   - Intro text boxes offer an overview of the chapter’s focus and content
   - Outro text boxes present a high level summary of key points made in the chapter.

2.7 Acknowledgement

Litmus wishes to express our gratitude to all those who contributed to this evaluation. We would especially like to thank central and local government participants who gave their input, and reviewed their draft case study, as contained in the Companion Case Study Report (23 March 2007).

This evaluation focused on describing the implementation of the Department’s facilitation services, identifying its short-term impacts, and determining the future needs of the sector. The evaluation comprised of internal stakeholder discussions, documentation analysis, 23 central government interviews, and eight local government case studies.
Objective 1:
Services: Evaluating the Department’s Roles and Initiatives and Delivery to Cabinet Paper
3. Rationale for the Department’s Facilitation Role

Detailed below is the background and rationale for the Department’s facilitation role as derived from the Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15 and other related Cabinet papers.

3.1 Overview of the community outcomes process

The Act provides the general framework and powers under which New Zealand’s 85 democratically elected and accountable local authorities operate.

The purpose of the Act is to provide for democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities. For local government, the Act:

- States their purpose
- Provides a broad role in promoting the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of their communities, taking a sustainable development approach
- Provides a framework and powers for councils to identify which activities they undertake, and how they undertake them
- Promotes their accountability to their communities.

Part 6 of the Act promotes greater accountability between local authorities and their communities. It introduces the requirement for local authorities to facilitate a process with their communities, at least every six years, to identify community outcomes for the intermediate and long-term future of the district or region. The role of the local authority is to facilitate the process, with the community having a sense of ownership of the identified outcomes.

The community outcomes process is designed to promote better co-ordination and application of community resources, and inform and guide priorities for activities undertaken by local authorities and other organisations. The role of local authorities is to facilitate the contribution others make to the outcomes and priorities identified by the community, including other local authorities, central government agencies, local organisations and the business sector.

Local authorities can decide what processes to use to identify and prioritise community outcomes, provided they encourage the community to contribute. They also must, before deciding on the process, identify other organisations and groups capable of influencing either the identification or the promotion of community outcomes, and, if practicable, secure their agreement to the process.

Unlike local authorities, central government agencies have no legislated requirement to engage in the identification and promotion of community outcomes. However, government policy does encourage this engagement, where there are mutually desirable outcomes.

Content from www.localgovernment.govt.nz
The Act also requires local authorities to prepare a ten-year Long-Term Council Community Plan which is to be reviewed every three years. The Long-Term Council Community Plan describes the community outcomes and priorities and the activities the local authority will undertake to contribute to the outcomes. The plan is designed to integrate decision-making and include information on the key policies of the local authority. It also describes linkages between activities and how they are funded.

The first full Long-Term Council Community Plans, following a full community outcomes process, were required by 30 June 2006. Plans produced by local authorities in 2003/04 and 2004/05 followed the community outcomes process to varying degrees.

Local authorities are required by section 92 of the Act to monitor, not less than once every three years, and report on, the progress made by the community in achieving the community outcomes. Local authorities’ intended and actual activities and performance in relation to their Long-Term Council Community Plan’s objectives continue to be set out in annual plans and reports.

At the time of this evaluation, having completed their Long-Term Council Community Plans by 30 June 2006, the focus for local authorities was on developing their monitoring and reporting frameworks.

### 3.2 Need for the Department’s facilitation role

#### 3.2.1 Problem definition

Improving engagement between central government agencies and local government is perceived as contributing to:

- Better understanding of each others’ goals and priorities at a local, regional and central level, (i.e. better understanding of roles and responsibilities, drivers and priorities), and how each may contribute appropriately to the identification and realisation of community outcomes. Engagement between central and local government will ensure realistic expectations are set and maintained.

- Progressing community outcomes through central and local government being better informed about what communities want and by thinking about how they might work together to achieve them.

- Improving policy development through better understanding of local conditions and concerns.

- Encouraging efficient use of public resources through the avoidance of duplication by greater co-ordination of information flows, and improved communication between sectors.

- Reducing compliance costs through the clustering of community outcomes and local and central government engagement.

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3 Content from Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15
In early 2004, there was growing recognition that effective engagement by central government in the community outcomes process may be hindered by:\(^{10}\):

- Lack of consistent information and communication reflecting the existence of 85 local authorities with varying relationships and understanding of central government agencies’ roles and responsibilities
- Significant variation in preparedness for the community outcomes process by central government agencies resulting in variations in resources and capabilities to respond to local government invitations to engage
- Lack of qualified, mandated central government staff, who understand the local government environment, are respected locally and can develop long-term relationships with the sector.

Recognising these challenges the Department proposed to Cabinet a series of actions to promote more effective central government engagement and improve the central and local government interface around the community outcomes process.

### 3.2.2 Cabinet response to problem definition

The Department was directed by Cabinet to facilitate and improve central and local government engagement in the community outcomes process. Specifically, paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Cabinet Paper recorded that Cabinet\(^{11}\):

“(8) agreed that, to facilitate the central/local government interface regarding community outcomes processes, the Department of Internal Affairs will:

8.1 continue to provide information to departments about the LGA;

8.2 work with LGNZ, in conjunction with departments, to establish a directory for local authorities and communities of central government information and contacts;

8.3 provide a central contact point for local government to indicate problems or opportunities regarding central government engagement in COPs;

8.4 provide suggestions to departments regarding their COPs engagement;

8.5 receive and collate information from departments on their involvement in COPs;

8.6 establish mechanisms for departments to share good practice and overcome difficulties regarding COPs;

8.7 convene a central/local government workshop annually to discuss how COPs are working and share lessons.

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\(^{10}\) Content from Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15

\(^{11}\) Content from Cabinet Policy Committee: Central Government Engagement in Community Outcomes Process; POL MIN (04) 12/15
(9) agreed that, all departments will:

9.1 ensure relevant departmental staff are informed about the LGA;

9.2 provide information to the Department for the directory of central government information and contacts;

9.3 provide information to the Department on their involvement in COPs and good practice examples.”

Cabinet directed the Department to facilitate the central and local government interface around the community outcomes process to overcome the potential barriers to engagement, specifically: lack of consistent communication, variation in preparedness, and a lack of capability across central and local government to develop inter-sector relationships. In establishing this role Cabinet recognised the long-term benefits for New Zealand of progressing community outcomes, improving policy development, and more efficient use of resources.
4. Implementing the Department’s Roles and Initiatives

This section describes and assesses the roles and initiatives implemented by the Department over the last 18 months, which align with the Cabinet Paper. Having considered the individual elements of the Department’s role, it highlights how the role, in its entirety, is perceived by central and local government participants.

4.1 Overview of the Department’s roles and initiatives

The Department’s Local Government and Community Branch, under the guidance of the Director of Operations, is responsible for implementing the Cabinet paper’s requirements. Commencing in November 2004, a number of roles and initiatives were established through a phased implementation process. The roles and initiatives established derive from the Cabinet paper’s requirements, and local government’s needs in seeking to engage with central government around the community outcomes process.

Table 1 highlights the commencement dates of these key roles and initiatives. It illustrates the evolution of the Department’s facilitation role over the last 18 months. Further, it shows the staggered recruitment of the four relationship managers, and thus the Department’s initial limited capacity to facilitate the central and local government interface.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Summary of key initiatives by commencement date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key roles and initiatives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information broker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship managers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ North(^{12}) and South Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Lower North Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Central North Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Government Interagency Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEECS(^{13})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website <a href="#">www.localcentral.govt.nz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual central/local government workshop:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Inaugural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and reporting seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic discussion group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication materials including: <em>At the Interface newsletter</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{12}\) From late 2005, covered Auckland and Northland.

\(^{13}\) SEECS stands for the four wellbeings of social, economic, environment and culture, with the 5 representing the four wellbeing agencies plus the Department.
The following section describes each of the above roles and initiatives and their link to the Cabinet paper, their effectiveness as defined by purpose, as well as suggested improvements. The assessment of effectiveness and suggested improvement draws from central and local government participants, and the analysis of documentation.

4.2 The Department’s roles and initiatives and their effectiveness

4.2.1 Interface team

Role

Interface Team’s purpose is to “facilitate the central/local government interface around the community outcomes process”. This aligns with the Cabinet requirement to provide central contact points for local government (8.3), and information to central government (8.1).

The interface team consists of:

- The Director of Operations is responsible for strategic overview and management of the interface team.
- An information broker is responsible for establishing infrastructure to enable an up-to-date flow of information to support central and local government and to promote opportunities for central government involvement in the community outcomes process.
- 4 relationship managers are responsible for facilitating engagement between central and local government, with an overall focus of identifying and responding to issues and trends in the community outcomes process. This role was loosely defined to meet variations in need across central and local government. Relationship managers are perceived by local and central government participants as the interface team.
- A policy analyst is responsible for gathering and analysing information about the interface to assist in planning, developing, interpreting and reviewing of relevant policy.
- A support officer assists with relevant administrative matters.

Activities undertaken

At a national level, relationship managers interact with:

- Central government agencies via the Central Government Interagency Group and SEEC5, (discussed in sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3), and other specific initiatives, (e.g. monitoring and reporting seminars with Statistics New Zealand).
- Local Government New Zealand around specific initiatives, (e.g. Maori engagement in the community outcomes process).

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14 As described in the Central Government Interagency Group minutes dated 28 April 2006.
15 As described in the newsletter “At the Interface” April 2006.
16 As described in the Central Government Interagency Group minutes dated 28 April 2006.
At a local government level, relationship managers have contacted all 85 local authorities across New Zealand. Across local government, there is significant variation in the level of interaction by relationship managers reflecting local authorities’ need, their stage in the community outcomes process, and relationship managers’ existing networks. Relationship managers tend to be more active regionally than locally.

Activities undertaken by relationship managers across local government include:

- Introducing local government to the Department’s facilitation role
- Attending regional meetings, (and some local meetings), to identify opportunities for central government engagement relating to community outcomes, (e.g. relationship managers attending Zone Meetings)
- Assisting with special projects involving local and central government, (e.g. the relationship manager providing support, and resources for the launch of the report on Future Taranaki)
- Driving ongoing regional community outcomes initiatives, (e.g. facilitation of Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty).

Effectiveness of relationship managers

Overall, the Department’s relationship managers are held in high esteem, and are described as:

- Knowledgeable of central and local government, and politically astute about how to operate effectively between these two sectors
- Well known, trusted and networked within their regions
- Passionate and driven about the community outcomes process
- Effective in identifying opportunities and smoothing engagement between central and local government and across local government
- Focused on meeting the needs of local government about community outcomes and engagement with central government in a timely and efficient manner.

For central government participants, relationship managers are seen as their ‘eyes and ears’ in the regions, and their tabling of local government issues is greatly appreciated.

Across local government, relationship managers appear to be more effective when they have existing connections and networks within a region. Although, in areas where they are unknown, some relationship managers are able to gain trust and acceptance via their strategic focus and input into community outcomes and engagement with central government.
Suggested improvements for relationship managers

Suggestions for enhancing or improving interactions with relationship managers include:

- **Accessibility:** For local government, the ability to have greater access to relationship managers, and for central government to have stronger linkages to relationship managers.
  - Local government appreciate that relationship managers have limited capacity due to the large areas they cover. Consequently, they can be reluctant to approach them with issues arising. However, there is not widespread support for significantly increasing the number of relationship managers. This highlights the need for relationship managers to be more targeted and focused in their approach.
  - Relationship managers have focused much attention on establishing relationships with local government. Going forward, consideration needs to be given to strengthening central government relationships to ensure relationship managers and their role are known regionally and nationally. The latter will assist in managing central and local government’s expectations of the Department.

- **Active support:** For central and local government, more active support from relationship managers.
  - Some central government agencies feel that the Department is slow to take responsibility for and address identified local government issues, (see section 4.2.2).
  - Some relationship managers are perceived as reactive, responding only to issues raised in meetings or queries presented to them. Conversely, other relationship managers are proactive in presenting local government with opportunities to engage with central government.

- **Relevant feedback:** For some central government agencies, receiving local government feedback from relationship managers about issues that they can address.
  - Some central government agencies are frustrated that relationship managers table local government criticisms about issues they have no influence over and cannot therefore address, (i.e. complaints about the legislated auditing process).

- **Clarity and style of communications supporting the intent of the role.**
  - There was some initial confusion and annoyance amongst local government due to some early comments by the Department about only dealing regionally, and coming to ‘sort out’ local government’s engagement with central government.
  - The need to avoid defensive language to local government over central government engagement regarding the community outcomes process.
4.2.2 Central Government Interagency Group

Role

In March 2005, the Department convened the inaugural meeting of the Central Government Interagency Group. The purpose of the Central Government Interagency Group aligns with Cabinet requirements of the Department providing to central government:

- Information on the Act (8.1)
- Suggestions on engagement with local government (8.4)
- Collation of their involvement with local government (8.5)
- Sharing good practice and overcoming difficulties regarding the community outcomes process (8.6).

Number of meetings and attendees

The Central Government Interagency Group has sat on 11 occasions over a 16-month period:

- 21 agencies have attended the forum at least once over this period, out of an estimated 31 agencies who have a potential interest in community outcomes\(^\text{17}\)
- Those attending are mainly senior policy or policy analysts
- Attendance varies with only four meetings having 12 or more agencies present.

Information shared at this forum

In line with the Cabinet requirements, the Department has provided the following information to central government agencies at this forum:

- General information about the Department’s role and initiatives
- Information specific to the operation of the community outcomes process
- Local government issues relating to their community outcomes process and central government engagement.

Central government agencies have shared at this forum information relating to their:

- Implemented community outcomes initiatives, (e.g. workshops, website improvements)
- Information on levels of engagement with local government.

\(^{17}\) This figure is based on those central government agencies perceived to have a potential link to/involvement in community outcomes.
Issue identification and resolution

The Central Government Interagency Group identifies local government issues for consideration through the sharing of information about their engagement and feedback from relationship managers interacting with local government, and through more formalised consultation. In November 2005, the Central Government Interagency Group released the issues based report entitled “Key Challenges and Opportunities regarding Central and Local Government Collaboration on the Community Outcomes Processes”.

Key issues identified through formal and informal data collection processes are detailed in Table 2 below, together with the Group’s response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key issues identified</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local government’s need for good practice and advice on monitoring and indicator development</td>
<td>Collaborative initiative between the Department, Local Government New Zealand and Statistics New Zealand conducting Monitoring and Reporting workshops across New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information desired by local government on Maori engagement and consultation</td>
<td>The Department is working with Local Government New Zealand to explore and develop resources for Maori engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different administrative boundaries of central and local government making engagement on community outcomes problematic</td>
<td>Working group set up to explore issues and Ruapehu District Council is being used as the test case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable understanding by central government of identified community outcomes</td>
<td>The Department disseminated a report summarising and analysing the community outcomes themes contained in local government’s Long-Term Council Community Plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effectiveness of the Central Government Interagency Group

Overall, the Central Government Interagency Group is an important forum for central government agencies to remain focused on their role in the community outcomes process. To date, this central government forum has successfully delivered to its draft Terms of Reference developed mid 2006 by:

- Sharing information about central government’s interaction with both central and local government around the community outcomes process
- Receiving support and advice from the Department in engaging in the community outcomes process
- Identifying key issues raised by local government, and seeking to resolve them through referral or the setting up of working groups.

Suggested improvements to the Central Government Interagency Group

Suggestions by central government participants to enhance the Central Government Interagency Group include:
Attendance: Ensuring more senior representatives of central government agencies regularly attend the forum, and invite local government representatives to attend to ensure:
– Consistency of understanding and forward momentum
– Effective dissemination of information back into central government agencies. Currently, this is occurring on an adhoc ‘as needs’ basis
– The voice of local government voice is heard, (e.g. attendance by Local Government New Zealand).

Strategic focus: Strengthening and communicating the strategic direction and purpose of the forum:
– The development of a draft Terms of Reference mid 2006 achieved this to some extent. Prior to its establishment, there was uncertainty about what the forum was seeking to achieve.

Issues identification and resolution: Utilising a systematic and robust process to identify issues that are representative of wider local government needs, and acting promptly to resolve them:
– The Department has been criticised by some central government participants for being slow ‘to lift projects’ off the table.

4.2.3 SEEC5

Role

In August 2005, SEEC5 was established to increase engagement between the four wellbeing agencies of the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Economic Development, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

SEEC5 acts as a working party for the Central Government Interagency Group to “discuss central/local government engagement in the community outcomes process”. It was intended therefore to link to the Cabinet paper by providing suggestions on engagement, collating involvement and sharing good practice, and issue identification and resolution, (i.e. paragraphs 8.4, 8.5 and 8.6).

Number of meetings and attendees

Since August 2005, SEEC5 has met on six occasions. The majority of the meetings were attended by senior representatives from the four wellbeing agencies and the Department’s information broker, relationship manager and/or policy analyst.

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18 As described in appendix one of the Central Government Departments Meeting Minutes dated 28 April 2006
Information shared and issues identified at SEEC5

From the outset, SEEC5 had difficulty defining its role and clearly differentiating itself from the Central Government Interagency Group. Aligning with its purpose, each wellbeing agency shared experiences and initiatives in working with local government.

SEEC5 initiated a project to create a shared understanding of ‘wellbeing’ for local and central government, (i.e. the Defining Wellbeing project). A draft document was developed with input from two agencies. However, the decision was made not to release the draft document, as local government was, by this time, developing their Long-Term Council Community Plans.

Effectiveness of SEEC5

Overall, local government participants note that SEEC5 was not effective as it:

- Duplicated the role of the Central Government Interagency Group
- Did not deliver the Defining Wellbeing project.

SEEC5 was disbanded in June 2006. There are no suggested improvements, as participants from the wellbeing agencies do not perceive an ongoing need for this group.

4.2.4 Website www.localcentral.govt.nz

Role

In March 2005, the Department launched the website www.localcentral.govt.nz. Its purpose, as noted in paragraph 8.2 of the Cabinet paper, is to “establish a directory for local authorities and communities of central government information and contacts”.

The Department promotes the website as providing local government with quick and easy access to information about central government agencies, and offering examples of good practice in the community outcomes process.

Content and use

Litmus’ review of the website on 20 September 2006, shows that it contains:

- 64 central government contact details by region, wellbeing group and agency.
- The Department’s Interface newsletters
- Information on 2005 and 2006 annual workshops
- Links to other agencies including Local Government New Zealand’s website
- Publications from different sources.
On average, 820 people visit the site per month, and around 450 per month are regular users. While these statistics indicate reasonable use of the website, local government participants in this evaluation describe their use as infrequent

**Effectiveness of website**

The website delivers to the Cabinet requirement of providing a directory with central government contacts and wider information relevant to the community outcomes process. However, it does not contain information for all departments, as required by paragraph 9.2 of the Cabinet paper. Thirteen Public Service Departments and non-Public Service Departments are not listed in the website. Note: While the Cabinet paper requires all central government departments to provide information to the Department, some departments perceived it was not appropriate to be listed, given their focus of providing policy advice to Government.

Users of the website describe it as a quick and basic tool offering access to central government contact details, and a quick source of general information.

**Suggested improvements to the website**

Central and local government participants’ suggested improvements to the website include:

- **Functionality:** Enhancing presentation and navigation
- **Relevance:** Ensuring information currency, and that it contains other relevant information about community outcomes and useful links
  - Avoiding duplication and confusion with Local Government New Zealand and Society of Local Government Managers websites
- **Promoting its use and value**
  - Some local government participants are aware of the site, but have not used it as they have established central government contacts.

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19 These figures are based on statistics provided by the Department for the period of March to June 2006.
4.2.5 Annual workshops

Role

As required by paragraph 8.7 of the Cabinet paper, the Department has convened in Wellington an annual central/local government workshop, in April 2005 and March 2006, to discuss how the community outcomes process is working and to share lessons learnt.

Attendance

In April 2005, 140 central and local government people attended the “Sharing Good Practice between Central and Local Government on the Community Outcomes Process” workshop. This workshop utilised a plenary style forum to outline local and regional community outcomes processes and central government perspectives on collaboration.

In March 2006, 131 central and local government people attended the “Giving Effect to Community Outcomes” workshop. Acting on the 2005 evaluation, this workshop utilised a world café approach to encourage networking. The two plenary sessions, supported by eight breakout sessions, focused on supporting partnership between central and local government.

Effectiveness of annual workshops

Overall, the workshops are described by central and local government attendees as useful in providing ‘real life’ information on what is happening across the regions regarding community outcomes, and enabling attendees to network across local and central government. The 2005 and 2006 evaluations indicate that attendees’ expectations of the workshops were met or exceeded.

Suggested improvements to the annual workshops

Suggestions from central and local government participants to enhance future workshops include:

- Promotion: Encouraging wider attendance by local government agencies through promoting the workshop’s relevance, regardless of how advanced their relationships with central government or community outcomes processes are. Further, the workshop needs to be clearly differentiated from other local government conferences
- Accessibility: Seeking ways to assist smaller local authorities to attend, given their more limited capacity and resources
- Timing: Selecting a time that maximises attendance by central and local government
  - In 2006, there were 20 less local government participants than in 2005. The workshop was held approximately three months before Long-Term Council Community Plans were due to be completed. Local government participants confirm that they were too busy to attend, or unable to see the relevance when their Long-Term Council Community Plan was so near to completion.
4.2.6 Monitoring and reporting seminars

Role

In line with paragraph 8.6 of the Cabinet paper, the Department identified and sought to meet local government’s need for training to deliver the legislated monitoring and reporting obligations on progress toward the achievement of community outcomes.

Meetings and attendees

In early 2006, the Department working collaboratively with Local Government New Zealand and Statistics New Zealand, designed and conducted regional seminars on local government monitoring and reporting in Auckland, Whangarei, Rotorua, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Christchurch. Approximately, 200 local government staff attended the seminars across the country.

Effectiveness of monitoring and reporting seminars

The monitoring and reporting seminars have successfully delivered information and advice to those who needed it most:

- Those local authorities in the midst of, or about to start work on the monitoring and reporting of their community outcomes, or those with little internal capacity found the workshops very useful
- The seminars were less relevant for those local authorities more advanced in the development of their monitoring and reporting frameworks.

The involvement of Statistics New Zealand at a regional level was seen as important in giving the seminar intellectual and statistical rigour. Statistics New Zealand noted that the Department ensured the structure and content of the seminar aligned with local government needs.

Suggested improvements to the seminars

There were only a few suggestions from central and local government participants to enhance these seminars, specifically:

- Promotion: Ensuring wide promotion of the seminars, and allowing attendance by other central government agencies
More practical sessions: Offering a more active learning approach rather than lecture style. This could include showcasing monitoring and reporting frameworks developed for other local authorities’ community outcomes.

4.2.7 E-discussion group

Role
Aligning with paragraph 8.6 of the Cabinet paper, the Department developed the Central Government Agency Community Outcomes Processes Discussion List to share electronically good practice and discuss issues relating to the community outcomes process. The Department is responsible for the list, with the licences for the software and infrastructure owned by the State Services Commission. The discussion list became operational on 14 September 2005.

Membership and use
Access to the e-discussion group is by authorised members with passwords provided by the Department. There are 90 members on the discussion list. Around half of the membership is made up by representatives from the Department and the Ministry of Social Development.

Only four people responded to the first discussion in January 2006 which sought input on:
- Information on forums held throughout New Zealand for central and local government
- Opportunities for increasing discussion between the local and central government
- Adapting central government processes to work across geographical boundaries.

The second communication, dated March 2006, was not a discussion but provided information on:
- The upcoming annual workshop and Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand’s workshop
- Publications from the Auditor General and presentations from monitoring and reporting seminars
- New links to Heartland Services from the localcentral website.

Effectiveness of e-discussion group
Given the lack of response to the first discussion and the infrequency of use, the e-discussion group is not effective in seeking input into issues or information about community outcomes processes. However, the second communication did share information about community outcomes, but whether this was of value is unknown. Many central government participants are not aware of this e-discussion group.
Suggested improvements to the e-discussion group

Currently, the e-discussion group does not add value to the facilitation of local and central government interface. Hence, there are few suggested improvements.

However, some central and local government participants are interested in it, with the caveat of requiring greater understanding of its purpose and their level of contribution. Given the lack of use at the central government level, it may be hypothesised that time pressures, other priorities, infrequent requests, and the lack of perceived relevance may continue to undermine the desired level of engagement.

4.2.8 Communication materials

Role

In line with the Cabinet requirement of providing information to central government agencies, suggesting engagement on community outcomes, and sharing good practice, (i.e. paragraphs 8.1, 8.4, and 8.6), the Department published:

- “Linking local and central government to promote community outcomes” a brochure providing an overview of the Act, the community outcomes process and the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface. The brochure was printed in March 2005 for distribution at the April 2005 workshop, and an update brochure was printed in November 2005
- “At the Interface” a quarterly newsletter distributed in April and July 2006 which contained high level information about the interface team and the community outcomes process
- “Working with local and central government to support community outcomes” in March 2006 offering an overview of the Act, the community outcomes process and the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface
- “Local Government – How Can You Get Involved” contains general information around becoming involved in local government decision making and participating in the community outcomes process.

These brochures are intended for both central and local government. There is no formal distribution system, rather materials are disseminated via the localcentral website, by relationship managers and at conferences.

Effectiveness of communication material

Central and local government participants note that the “At the Interface” newsletter offers an overview of information about the Department’s role and initiatives being undertaken. Local government participants offer positive feedback on the Department’s brochures as:

- Customising information for local government to give to their communities and stakeholders
- Helping to inform central government about local government.
Suggested improvements to the communications material

Suggestions to enhance communication materials include:

- Providing more information about central government’s initiatives relating to the community outcomes process
- Avoiding duplication with information available on the Internet
- Reviewing the timing of publication to maximise their usefulness as a tool for good practice.

4.3 Discussion about the Department’s role

The previous section discussed the roles and initiatives implemented by the Department, their link to the Cabinet paper, their individual effectiveness, and suggested improvements. We now discuss how the Department’s role in its entirety is perceived by central and local government participants.

4.3.1 Overall perceptions

The Department’s role initially lacked clarity and a clear strategic direction, due in part to arriving late in the community outcomes process. Consequently, some central government participants struggled with its relevance to them, and local government participants were uncertain how the Department could assist them in the community outcomes process. However, through interaction with relationship managers over the last 18 months, the Department’s role has become clearer.

The role is now described as critical in fostering central and local government engagement. Many central and local government participants comment that the Department’s role maintains local and especially central government’s focus on community outcomes. Further, the Department’s role overcomes potential barriers to cross-sector engagement, and offers a wider perspective on the differing community outcomes processes happening across New Zealand.

The Department is the appropriate facilitator. Both central and local government participants recognise the Department’s expertise in local and central government, their responsibility for the Act, and their neutrality, (i.e. they are not directly responsible for a specific wellbeing).

4.3.2 Perceptions by sector

Relationship managers are the face and the driving force of the Department’s facilitation role, for both central and local government participants. They are supported by other information sharing initiatives including the Central Government Interagency Group, the localcentral website, annual workshop, issue-based seminars, and other communications material.

To a large extent, participants’ perception of the Department’s role is determined by their interactions with relationship managers. Consequently, perceptions of the Department’s role
vary across central and local government participants, depending on the level and type of interaction with the relationship managers.

Central government agencies

Central government agencies perceptions of the Department’s role are driven primarily by their participation in the Central Government Interagency Group, and the benefits gained from this forum:

- Focal point keeping the community outcomes process on the central government agencies’ agenda
- Facilitator connecting central government agencies to other central government agencies, and to a lesser extent central and regionally based central government agencies to regional initiatives around community outcomes, (e.g. Statistics New Zealand’s regional monitoring and reporting seminars)
- Information sharer about the Act, different community outcomes processes, opportunities to engage, and central and local government agencies’ initiatives and activities around community outcomes.

Local government

Local government describe a wider role for the Department than central government agencies:

- Facilitator connecting local government across the levels of engagement, (i.e. local, sub-regional, regional and national)
- Information sharer offering examples of differing community outcomes process, and the levels and types of engagement
- Adviser giving advice on queries relating to community outcomes or other matters, (e.g. advising Our Way Southland on how to progress their monitoring).

To a lesser extent, the Department, through their relationship managers, is described as:

- Advocate taking issues or queries back to central government about the community outcomes process or other local government matters, (e.g. presenting Choosing Futures Waikato’s questions, issues and frustrations to Wellington and feeding through suggestions for legislative change)
- Funder offering assistance with funding for workshops and seminars to enable the community outcomes process, (e.g. funding the launch of Future Taranaki and Our Way Southland and funding monitoring and reporting seminars). Awareness of funding was low or non-existent amongst those who had not received financial assistance from the Department. Consequently, funding was not a key driver of use, but greatly appreciated when available.
4.3.3 *Suggested improvements to the Department’s role*

Central and local government participants suggested improvements to strengthen the Department’s facilitation role are:

- Clearly communicated vision and strategic direction, which will ensure appropriate management of central and local government’s expectations of what the role delivers, and when to seek the Department’s involvement:
  - Feedback from central and local government participants indicate a tension between those who recognise the role to be about facilitation, (i.e. connecting local and central government to work together), and those who perceive the role to be more action focused, (i.e. doing projects related to the community outcomes process).
  - Amongst local government, there is evidence of confusion about when to seek relationship managers’ assistance. For example, a small rural local authority not knowing to approach their relationship manager to facilitate a central government agency’s assistance on a community outcome, and a large local authority commenting that they have not given due consideration to how the Department could assist as they perceived the role to be for smaller less well resourced local authorities.

- Vocal and visible leadership both within the Department and across central government:
  - Many local and central government participants comment that without wider central government leadership support, (i.e. at General Manager or CEO level or via the Deputy Secretaries Group), it will be difficult to foster and sustain central government engagement in the community outcomes process in the long-term.

- Ongoing promotion: Relationship managers need to continue promoting their role and its benefits to local and central government.
  - Staff turnover and/or lack of internal transfer of information within central and local government, and the forthcoming local elections may result in a loss of institutional knowledge about the Department’s role.

- Alignment with the wider Department to ensure consistency of message and focus, and the transfer of learnings from local government.
  - Local government perceive that in some instances issues noted to relationship managers are not feeding through to the Department’s Local Government and Community Branch’s policy team, (e.g. rates rebate scheme was raised two years ago and is currently being addressed).
  - Regional staff of the Department’s Local Government and Community Branch are, in some cases, the preferred local contact due to established relationships. Conversely, some regional staff of the Local Government and Community Branch are eroding the Department’s facilitation role by dictating a particular approach to community engagement.
  - The Department’s communication team at national office in Wellington applying standardised ‘communication rules’ to a regionally based initiative of ‘Putting Pen to Paper’. This inflexibility within the Department reinforces local government’s belief that central government will only engage on their terms.

- Identification of levers to encourage central government engagement:
– One local authority commented that they prefer to go to the State Services Commission when central government agencies do not engage.

– A few others question the credibility or status of the Department in the eyes of other central government agencies and the extent to which they can influence their behaviour.

Over the last 18 months, the Department has implemented a number of roles and initiatives, as prescribed by the Cabinet paper. The relationship managers are the key drivers of the Department’s facilitation role, supported by the localcentral website, annual workshop, issues based initiatives, and communication material. Central and local government participants acknowledge that the Department’s role is critical in maintaining central government focus on community outcomes, and overcoming barriers to engagement. Key suggestions to enhance this facilitation role include a clearly defined vision and strategic direction, visibility, cross-sector leadership, and ongoing promotion.
5. Delivery to Cabinet Requirements

Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Cabinet paper specify activities for the Department and central government agencies in seeking improvements to the central and local government interface. Detailed below is the extent to which the Department and central government agencies have delivered Cabinet requirements. Also suggested are improvements to align delivery more closely to these requirements. The results below draw from the findings of the previous section.

5.1 The Department’s delivery to Cabinet requirements

Overall, the Department has, in the main, delivered the Cabinet requirements as prescribed in paragraph 8 of the 2004 Cabinet paper.

The Department has delivered to and beyond the Cabinet requirements on:

- 8.1 - Providing information to central government departments, located nationally and regionally, about the Act. Relationship managers have also provided information on local government, the community outcomes process, Long-Term Council Community Plans, monitoring and auditing, costs of compliance and regional initiatives.
  - These communications have occurred through the Central Government Interagency Group, brochures, interaction with the information broker and relationship managers, annual workshops and the local central website.
  - Relationship managers have also provided this information to local government together with information about central government agencies. However, the late establishment of the Department’s role in the community outcomes process meant that some local government and some central government agencies did not require information about the Act. Although, they appreciate earlier initiatives by the Department informing about the Act.

- 8.2 - Developing a web-based directory containing listings of 64 central government contacts, and other information relevant to the community outcomes process.

- 8.3 - Providing relationship managers and an information broker as a central contact point for local government regarding central government engagement in the community outcomes process.

- 8.6 - Sharing good practice and identifying and resolving issues relating to the community outcomes through interaction with relationship managers, the Central Government Interagency Group, the annual workshops and collection, analysis and resolution of local government issues.

- 8.7 - Facilitating two central / local workshops in 2005 and 2006 to discuss the community outcomes process and share lessons.

The Department has met, to a more limited extent, the Cabinet requirements of:

- 8.4 - Providing suggestions to central government on their engagement in the community outcomes process. Relationship managers are active in seeking
opportunities for central government to engage. However at times, local government is not ready for this interaction and as a consequence suggestions by relationship managers are not progressed. There is also a need for subtlety in approaching central government agencies to engage. The Department has therefore tended to offer more one-off suggestions to central government agencies on their engagement, for example:

- Where one is reluctant to engage locally preferring regional engagement
- Where local government identifies an issue relating to their community outcomes process requiring input from central government, (e.g. Statistics New Zealand and Audit New Zealand in relation to the monitoring and reporting queries)
- Where central government agencies are engaged with local government and appear to be withdrawing or losing focus on community outcomes, (e.g. COBOP).

8.5 - Collating information of central government’s engagement in community outcomes process. Beyond the capture of information in the minutes of the Central Government Interagency Group and presentations at the annual workshop, there is little evidence of systematic capture of central government agencies’ engagement in the community outcomes process across New Zealand. While this is a requirement of the Cabinet paper, consideration needs to be given to how this collation, beyond the capture of good practice as in paragraph 8.6, will actually enable the facilitation of the central and local government interface.

5.2 Central government agencies’ delivery to Cabinet requirements

Paragraph 9 of the Cabinet paper imposes requirements upon all central government departments in terms of the community outcomes process and interactions with the Department, specifically:

- 9.1 - Informing relevant staff about the Act
- 9.2 - Providing information to the Department for the development of the localcentral website
- 9.3 - Providing information to the Department about their involvement in the community outcomes process and good practice examples.

Overall, there is a mixed response to the extent to which central government agencies have delivered to their Cabinet requirements. Some central government agencies appear to have been very proactive, while others seem to be less engaged. This reflects central government agencies differing perspectives of relevance of community outcomes to their core business:

- 9.1 - Central government agencies do not appear to have formal dissemination processes to feed information from the Central Government Interagency Group to their wider staff. Information tends to be provided on a ‘need-to-know’ or informal basis. Note: This evaluation does not systematically evaluate other central government agencies’ internal communication practice.

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20 The minutes include the regular report to the Central Government Interagency Group on departments’ local government activities.
9.2 – Sixty four central government agencies have forwarded their contact details to the local central website, while 13 Public Service Departments and non-Public Service Departments are not listed. Note: While the Cabinet paper requires all central government departments to provide information to the Department, some departments perceived it was not appropriate to be listed given their focus of providing policy advice to Government.

9.3 – Twenty one out of a potential 31 central government agencies attend the Central Government Interagency Group and share information on their involvement in the community outcomes process. Examples of good practice are shared via a number of mechanisms including the Central Government Interagency Group, annual workshop, and other communication mechanisms.

5.3 Suggestions on seeking greater alignment to Cabinet requirements

- (8.4) Exploring the potential for a strategic approach to central government engagement in the community outcomes process.
  - The Department has completed a report detailing the key theme areas contained in local governments’ Long-Term Council Community Plans. From this analysis, it may be possible to identify the themes central government agencies may wish to engage with local government on, either at a regional or national level.
  - Working collaboratively with carefully selected central government agencies, this information could be used as a basis to determine how potential engagement with local government fits with their work streams. This approach reverses the current model of local government identifying their needs and the Department seeking to meet it via facilitating engagement with central government.

- (8.5 and 9.3) Reviewing the information needs of central and local government relating to their engagement in the community outcomes process.
  - The review would seek to identify the type of information local and central government want to receive about the community outcomes process and their engagement. This will offer the Department a framework in which to collect, collate and disseminate information of greatest use or interest; thus, keeping information flows open, relevant and interesting.

- (9.1) Developing communication tools to effectively disseminate information about the community outcomes process through central government agencies.
  - Although the Department has little influence over the information flows within central government agencies, it can seek to develop communication tools that support the flow of information, (e.g. one page report card). The value of these tools needs to be assessed in the wider information review suggested above.

- (9.2) Completing, updating and promoting the contact list on the local central website.
In the main, the Department has delivered to and beyond the Cabinet paper requirements. However, the Department can seek greater alignment by exploring a more strategic approach to central government engagement in community outcomes, and through systematic identification of local and central government’s information needs. There is more mixed delivery by central government agencies to the Cabinet paper requirements. While most central government agencies have provided their contact details to the Department, a more limited number is actively engaged a national level in the Central Government Interagency Group. Within central government agencies internal promotion of community outcomes may require further consideration.
Objective 2
Overall function: Identifying the Short-Term Impacts Attributable to the Department’s Facilitation Role
6. The Department’s Operating Environment

It is widely agreed that there are factors that affect central and local government working together on the community outcomes process, and more widely. This environment needs to be given due recognition in identifying the short-term impacts for the Department’s facilitation role. This section describes the multi-levelled nature of engagement across central and local government, and highlights the challenges for the Department in facilitating the local and central government interface.

6.1 Multi-levelled engagement

In facilitating the central and local government interface in relation to the community outcomes process, the Department’s relationship managers operate across local, sub-regional, regional and national levels:

- **Local engagement** includes local authorities engaging with their communities, businesses, other local and regional authorities, and regionally and nationally based central government agencies on community outcomes. At a local level, relationship managers offer advice on community engagement and the community outcomes process. On occasion, relationship managers may facilitate engagement between local authorities and central government, or assist with seeking to determine the commonality of local authorities’ community outcomes across the region.

- **Sub-regional engagement** includes several local authorities working together on a specific community outcome (e.g. wellbeing/health), and engaging with a regional central government agency that has responsibilities across their district boundaries (e.g. District Health Boards). Relationship managers may assist several local authorities to collectively engage at a sub-regional level with central government.

- **Regional engagement** focuses on regionally focused community outcomes processes, (e.g. Future Taranaki). Relationship managers tend to operate at this level through attendance at regional forums. This focus enables them to get a sense of issues regionally and locally, and to identify opportunities for central government engagement.

- **National engagement** involves local and regional authorities engaging with central government at a national level, as well as central to central government engagement. As central government participants note, it is assumed that central government agencies are aware of and understand each other’s roles and responsibilities. However, this is not always the case. They comment that much can be gained/learnt from central to central government interaction in relation to community outcomes.

Relationship managers operate across these levels on an ‘as-needs-basis’ or as opportunities to connect arise. However, relationship managers tend to focus principally at a regional level.

Boundaries between and across the levels of engagement are not clearly defined, thus adding further complexity in defining roles and responsibilities for engagement – another key area of negotiation for relationship managers. The potential difficulties for central and local government operating across district boundaries have been noted by the Department, and this area is currently being explored by the Department.
6.2 Variations in relationships and need

For relationship managers, the multi-levelled nature of interface engagement is further complicated by the variation in need relating to the community outcomes process, and the existing relationships between central and local government.

The Department’s facilitation role was implemented at a time when all local authorities had adopted their first transitional Long-Term Council Community Plans. Relationship managers were therefore entering into an evolving environment with significant variation in need relating to the community outcomes process, and relationships between central and local government. Relationship managers had to determine the starting point for engagement between central and local government within the context of the stage the local authority was at in the community outcomes process. Some local government participants note that some relationship managers struggled initially as they did not identify the appropriate need, or did not acknowledge existing relationships and achievements.

Variations in relationships

- Across New Zealand, the relationship between central and local government lies on a continuum from established working relationships around community outcomes (e.g. Waitakere City Council), to those with more adhoc relationships relating to roading projects or civil defence emergencies (e.g. South Taranaki District Council), to the relatively non-existent (e.g. Rangitikei District Council). Those local authorities with more established relationships with central government perceived less need for the Department’s facilitation role, than those with few established relationships.

- Existing relationships between central and local government sit at differing stages along Craig and Courtney’s (2004) partnership continuum of co-existence, networking, co-operation, collaboration and partnership, dependent on the issue under consideration. For example, a District Health Board may be in a partnership relationship with a local authority in relation to healthy eating, and in a network forum with them on housing standards. In this context, the focus for the Department is not to achieve a partnership relationship across all interactions between central and local government. It is, however, to bring the parties together to establish relationships to appropriately work on mutually beneficial community outcomes.

Variations in stage of the community outcomes process

- Across New Zealand, varying approaches had been taken by different local authorities in the transitional phase to identify community outcomes. Consequently, the Department contributed less in regions with an advanced community outcomes process, and were more valuable to those commencing or at an earlier stage in their process of adopting the second Long-Term Council Community Plan in July 2006.

- Across central government, there is variation in the levels of support and readiness to engage with local government regarding community outcomes. Some central government agencies had already undertaken a significant amount of engagement with local government around community outcomes, while others had not yet established how community outcomes aligned with their strategic focus.
6.3 Presence of other regional facilitators

As well as contending with variations in needs and relationships, relationship managers also had, in some regions, to negotiate the presence of other central government agencies playing an important and appreciated facilitation role relating to the community outcomes process.

Before the introduction of the Act, the Ministry of Social Development's Regional Commissioners had been building cross-sector relationships, and providing funding for local projects that aligned with the Ministry's strategic focus. With the enactment of the Act, the Ministry introduced Regional Social Development Managers to facilitate engagement around the community outcomes process. Consequently, before the arrival of relationship managers, cross-sector community outcomes forums were to a large extent driven by the Ministry of Social Development.

Feedback from local government participants indicates some initial rivalry and confusion between the role of the relationship managers and the Ministry's Regional Social Development Managers. However, local government participants believe there is a need for both roles as:

- The Department offers a broader focus across the four wellbeings
- The Ministry offers discretionary funding for regional initiatives and projects.

In some regions, the Department’s relationship managers and the Ministry’s Regional Social Development Managers have established an effective and supportive working relationship. This complimentary relationship enables the more effective coverage of large geographical areas, the passing on of relevant information, and a strengthened focus on community outcomes. However, in other regions, they seem to struggle to differentiate their roles, and a level of tension and rivalry appears to continue.

While supportive of the presence of both the Ministry and the Department, local government participants warn of the potential overload and irritant of many agencies creating relationship manager positions to seek engagement with local government around community outcomes – referred to as a ‘revolving door syndrome’.

6.4 Overcoming historical engagement barriers

Local government participants acknowledge that some of the greatest challenges relationship managers face in seeking to facilitate the central and local government interface in the community outcomes process is overcoming misunderstandings and tensions across the sectors:

- Differing rules for local and central government: Local government object that they are required by legislation to find ways to work with central government, but there is only an intent for central government to engage on mutually desirable outcomes.
- Frustrations of engagement: Local government note that in some cases regionally located central government staff lack the authority or resources to make decisions without reference and sign-off by Wellington. This results in a time consuming and frustrating engagement process. Local government perceive that central government want to engage only on their terms and about issues important to them. Conversely, central government are unable to commit resources to engage with 85 local authorities.
Not true partnership: A general concern exists that central government may not support local government if they are in the ‘firing line’ for not delivering community outcomes over which they have little control. Many local government participants are vocal in positioning their responsibility as facilitating community outcomes, not delivering. This is an area of possible future tension as local government may be critical about central government agencies who have a responsibility for community outcomes that are not being met.

Differing sense of worth: Local government recognise central government’s differing policy processes. However, many of those interviewed believe that central government see local policy development as inferior and thus tend to take a dictatorial approach, affecting cross-sector engagement. Conversely, local government can be patch protective and block central governments’ attempts to engage in their region, if they sense a lack of appreciation for their community.

Relationship managers have to negotiate these perceived tensions to create a mutually supportive space in which central and local government can effectively engage.

6.5 Negotiating the operating environment

Understanding the dynamic and evolving environment in which relationship managers are operating highlights the breadth of skills and expertise to be successful in this role, specifically:

- Strong regional networks, and ability to facilitate relationships across levels
- Listening and analysis skills to understand the subtleties of the environment, and to identify engagement opportunities, (i.e. stage in process, nature of existing or previous relationships)
- Collaborative working style to negotiate boundaries and opportunities of working with other facilitators
- Negotiating skills to manage through perceived barriers to central and local government engagement
- Tenacity to keep seeking opportunities, and willingness to share learnings widely
- Prioritisation and targeting skills to effectively cover large geographical regions.

In seeking to facilitate engagement between central and local government the Department’s relationship managers are operating across local, sub-regional, regional and national levels. Negotiating this multi-level environment is a complex process, although relationship managers tend to focus primarily at a regional level. In seeking to facilitate central and local government engagement, relationship managers need to identify were local authorities are in the community outcomes process, and their existing relationships. The latter reflects that across central and local government there is significant variation in the engagement with and approach to the community outcomes process, as well as readiness to engage with other parties. Relationship managers also need to negotiate the presence of other regional facilitators to ensure that local authorities are not overburdened. Further, relationship managers have to overcome historical misunderstanding between central and local government, and at times bear the brunt of their frustration.
7. Short-Term Impacts Identified for Central Government

Over the last 18 months, the Department’s relationship managers have been seeking to facilitate central government engagement with local government in a dynamic and evolving environment. Section 7 details the short-term impacts identified for central government, attributable to the Department. It also highlights the gains made through the Department’s facilitation, and suggests improvements to support the desired benefits from this engagement.

7.1 Short-term impacts identified

Based on the Department’s activities over the last 18 months, the short-term impacts identified are those that reflect central government agencies acknowledging their role in the community outcomes process, and for some moving to work with local government on community outcomes. Feedback from central government participants and from the local government case studies identifies four short-term impacts which are detailed below:

1. Connecting

A key role for the Department is creating a sense of connection between central government and the community outcomes process. This is being achieved by relationship managers at two levels:

- Bringing central government agencies to national and regional forums to create awareness of the community outcomes process and the mutual benefits of engaging with local government. This is occurring via the Central Government Interagency Group, and regionally based central government forums. These forums are critical in:
  - Maintaining focus and ensuring community outcomes are on central government agencies’ wider agendas
  - Laying the foundations of awareness and understanding upon which central government agencies will be more likely to engage with local government when an appropriate opportunity arises
  - Creating awareness and understanding across central government agencies about other agencies’ respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

- Seeking mutually beneficial opportunities for central government to engage through relationship managers’ interaction on regional interagency forums, and interactions with local authorities. While community outcomes are at a relatively formative stage, relationship managers are having a measure of success in identifying these opportunities:

21 See appendix 3 for a more detailed analysis of the short-term impacts identified for the central government agencies who participated in the evaluation.

22 The short-term impacts were developed from the evolution of the draft intervention logic based on feedback from central and local government participants. Local government and regionally based central government participants’ feedback can be found in the Case Study Companion Report (23 March 2007).
The monitoring and reporting seminars across the regions connected local government to Statistics New Zealand to assist in their development of appropriate indicators and monitoring frameworks.

Rangitikei District Council’s central government forums in Marton and Wellington connected a small rural council with central government agencies to assist in the identification of their community outcomes, and then the sharing of outcomes identified.

Inviting the Office of the Auditor-General to present at a number of regional interagency groups on the reporting requirements of the Act.

Informing local government when central government agencies are in their regions, (e.g. the Ministry for Culture and Heritage road-show).

Impact: The Department’s relationship managers have ensured 21 central government agencies are aware of the community outcomes process. They have connected at least 12 central government agencies to varying degrees to local government to assist in meeting local government’s legislated requirements under the Act or other identified needs. This connecting is the foundation on which future engagement may be based.

2. Creating relevance

The Department has a critical role in demonstrating to central government agencies the relevance of the community outcomes process. While central government agencies may attend national and regional forums, this does not guarantee that they will engage with local government on community outcomes.

Relationship managers have had more one-off success in this area, for example encouraging a central government agency to engage locally when their initial preference was regional. The Department has been assessed as less successful in creating relevance because:

- Four central government agencies who attend the Central Government Interagency Group do not perceive the community outcomes process of relevance to them.
  - Their lack of engagement is due to differing priorities, difficulty in aligning community outcomes with core work-streams, and/or perceiving this is the role of their regionally based operating divisions.
- Ten central government agencies are not attending this national forum. It is assumed they are not therefore engaging in the community outcomes process.

The Department’s more limited success in creating relevance reflects:

- Other priorities: Relationship managers focused their energies on identifying and meeting local government’s immediate needs through the engagement of appropriate central government agencies, principally around monitoring and reporting.
- Lack of drive from local government: Local authorities have tended not to seek wider engagement with central government beyond their monitoring and reporting needs. Consequently, some local authorities have not been receptive to suggestions by relationship managers about opportunities to engage more widely with central government. With the completion of the Long-Term Council Community Plans in June 2006, many local authorities are only now considering who they wish to engage with beyond their existing central government relationships.
No immediate need: Key wellbeing and other central government agencies needed in the early stages of the community outcomes processes by local government were willing to and/or were engaged with local government.

Impact: Given the need to meet local government’s more immediate needs, the Department has not systematically sought to create relevance around the community outcomes process for those central government agencies not engaged. To achieve the desired longer-term benefits of better understanding between local and central government resulting in progressed community outcomes, this is an area that the Department needs to apply greater focus. In doing so, there is greater possibility that the acknowledged barrier of variations in preparedness by central government agencies to engage may be overcome.

3. Smoothing engagement

Having connected and created relevance, the Department has a role in assisting central government agencies in determining how to effectively work with local government on community outcomes. This is a negotiated process which takes time, and careful consideration to define and agree accountabilities, roles and responsibilities, and tasks to be undertaken.

Relationship managers have been skilled at either significantly making easy or assisting with the engagement of at least 12 central government agencies with local government. They have offered central government advice on engagement, encouraged and supported the engagement process through offering assistance and resources, and by gently facilitating any emerging tensions, for example:

- The relationship manager’s facilitation of COBOP ensures key central government agencies stay engaged, and through management of agendas and other administrative tasks makes the engagement process easy
- Making easy the set up and engagement between Rangitikei District Council and central government agencies in Marton and Wellington
- Identifying local government’s monitoring and reporting needs, informing the relevant central government agencies, assisting in the development and set up of the regional seminars.

Impact: The Department has successfully facilitated the engagement of at least 12 central government agencies with local government. These engagements related to core local government needs (i.e. monitoring and reporting), initial introductions, or forums initiated by local government. The Department’s facilitation of these engagements are seen by some participants as the ‘invisible glue’, which helps the parties to learn to work together and will over time assist in the realisation of the long-term benefits of central and local government working together.

4. Sharing good practice learnings

The Department’s relationship managers are gathering and disseminating examples of good practice about differing community outcomes processes, and central and local government engagement around community outcomes. Relationship managers excel in this role, and it is one that is greatly appreciated by all central government participants interviewed.
Good practice is being shared through both formal and informal mechanisms, (i.e. one-on-one interaction with relationship managers, via regional and national interagency forums, the annual workshop and the local/central website).

Impact: All central government participants appreciate being kept informed about the community outcomes processes, and wider central and local government issues. However, there is limited evidence that information sharing is resulting in changed practice amongst central government agencies. It is likely that over time this information sharing will enhance central government understanding about community outcomes, therefore creating a foundation in which community outcomes may become more embedded within central government processes.

7.2 Facilitation gains made

Having identified the short-term impacts emerging for central government following interaction with the Department, we now consider whether the Department’s facilitation role is improving central government agencies’ engagement with local government in the community outcomes process. In addressing this, we recognise that there are limitations to what the Department could achieve within the defined 18 month period as:

- The community outcomes process is at a formative stage, (i.e. both central and local government are learning about the process and the relationships that evolve from it)
- Local authorities with established and effective working relationships with central government comment that these relationships developed over a long time span, (i.e. ten years plus)
- The staggered recruitment and thus initial limited capacity of the relationship managers.

Positively, the Department has made facilitation gains, and are setting the foundation for future engagement between central and local government, specifically:

- 21 central government agencies are attending the Central Government Interagency Group
- Out of the 16 central government agencies interviewed for whom the Department could be expected to facilitate their engagement with local government:
  - Four note the Department’s significant contribution to their engagement with local government, and/or fostering a greater understanding about the community outcomes process
  - Eight note the Department’s assistance via information sharing, connecting with local government, and assisting on specific projects.

However, there is room for further improvement as four central government agencies note the Department did not make a difference to their relations with local government. This reflects these agencies’ ongoing perception of the community outcomes’ lack of relevance to them. Further, ten central government agencies are unconnected to the Department’s facilitation role.
Facilitation gains for central government have been driven by relationship managers seeking to meet local government needs. As a result, there has been targeted connecting of central government agencies to meet these needs. Given the formative nature of the community outcomes process and pressing legislative timeframes to deliver the first full Long-Term Council Community Plans, this was an acceptable interim strategy.

Long-term, merely reacting to local government needs may result in the Department not addressing systematically the reasons some central government agencies are not engaging, (i.e. the perceived lack of relevance and their preparedness). By using a more strategic approach to central government engagement, the Department can be more planned, prioritised and proactive in facilitating central government engagement. Consequently, a strategic approach is more likely to assist in the realisation of the longer-term benefits desired from central and local government engagement of:

- Greater understanding of each others goals
- Progressed community outcomes
- Improved policy development
- Efficient use of public resources.

### 7.3 Suggested improvements

The following suggestions focus on the Department taking a more strategic focus in seeking central government engagement to realise the desired long-term benefits detailed above. A central government engagement strategy may be based on the Department’s analysis of the community outcomes themes identified across New Zealand. This central government engagement strategy could underpin and direct the Department’s facilitation role, specifically:

- **Connecting**: Identifying and prioritising which central government agencies’ involvement are needed to realise the community outcomes, and their needs in relation to community outcomes
- **Creating relevance**: Informing and negotiating with the prioritised central government agencies, determining their potential contribution to the community outcomes at a national, regional and if appropriate local level, and the boundaries of their involvement. The latter is important as it enables the management of local government expectations.
- **Smoothing engagement**: Facilitating the process of engagement between the parties. As noted, this is an area in which the Department excels. In moving forward, the Department needs to clearly define its role as facilitating central and local government to work together and not the management of projects per se. The latter is critical if the Department is to avoid criticism for not identifying and delivering on projects.
- **Sharing good practice**: Sharing of good practice needs to be placed into a more strategic information framework with a clear definition of what, who and how information is being shared, and for what benefit.

This strategic central government engagement approach will be supplemented by relationship managers continuing to identify the emerging needs of local government in relation to community outcomes, and thus emerging opportunities for central government engagement.
Given the formative stage of the community outcomes process, the Department has focused on connecting central government agencies based on the immediate needs of local government. The Department has connected at least 21 central government agencies to national and regional forums, including the Central Government Interagency Group. At the initiation of the Department at least 12 central government agencies have assisted in meeting local government’s needs, primarily around monitoring and reporting of community outcomes. Central government agencies, attending national and regional forums, appreciate being kept informed by the Department about the community outcomes process across New Zealand. While the Department has achieved some targeted success in facilitating central government agencies to engage in the community outcomes process, other agencies do not appear to be engaged. Consequently, consideration needs to be given to identifying a more targeted and tailored approach to central government engagement based on analysis of community outcomes, local government need, and central government agencies’ strategic direction.
8. Short-Term Impacts Identified for Local Government

Having considered the short-term impacts for central government agencies, we now turn to identifying the short-term impacts for local government attributable to the Department. Section 8 also highlights the gains made via the Department’s facilitation of the interface. It also offers suggestions to support the ongoing emergence of the desired long-term benefits of central and local government engagement.

8.1 Short-term impacts identified

From local government participants’ feedback, short-term impacts were identified about the Department’s contribution in facilitating their engagement with central government regarding community outcomes. While the impacts are similar to central government agencies, there is a slightly different emphasis due to local government’s legislated responsibility for community outcomes.

The four short-term impacts are:

1. Connecting

Local government is aware of its legislated responsibilities. Consequently, the Department does not need to create a connection to the community outcomes process, as in the main it exists. However, the Department via their relationship managers have a key role in identifying opportunities for central government agencies in assisting local government in their community outcomes process. However, local authorities are not always ready for this level of interaction with central government, and can therefore reject the Department’s proposals for engagement.

Overall, relationship managers have connected local authorities within six of the eight local government case studies to central government agencies to meet their identified needs, including:

- Monitoring and reporting needs as legislated in the Act through seminars and presentations at a regional level
- Specific initiatives, such as the central government forums for Rangitikei District Council and groups/workshops forums arising from COBOP
- Local workshops to introduce central government staff based regionally.

Note: The two local government cases not connected had existing relationships with central government set up over the last ten years (i.e. Manukau and Waitakere City Councils). While they attended the monitoring and reporting seminars, the seminars added little value given the advanced stage of their monitoring frameworks.

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23 See appendix 3 for a more detailed analysis of the short-term impacts identified for the eight local government case studies.

24 The short-term impacts were developed from the evolution of the draft intervention logic based on feedback from local government participants. This feedback can be found in the Case Study Companion Report (23 March 2007).
Impact: Relationship managers connected local authorities in six out of eight local government case studies to central government agencies. Through this connecting, the immediate needs of local government are being addressed. Further, introductions made through these forums and interactions are important in establishing and maintaining connections with central government. They are the foundations on which activities to promote and realise community outcomes may be built.

2. Creating relevance

The Department has supported local government to remain focused on community outcomes when energy wanes or focus drifts. Relationship managers offer ‘strategic steerage’ through their presence and contribution on regional forums across the eight local government case studies, (as noted by some local government participants, relationship managers lift and redirect discussions that are losing sight of the wider intent of community outcomes).

Comments from some local government participants indicate that following the completion of the Long-Term Council Community Plans in June 2006, there has been a decline in focus and some uncertainty about how to proceed in prioritising and developing initiatives to support the emergence of their community outcomes. This decline in focus reinforces the role relationship managers can play in these regional forums.

Relationship managers through their interactions with local government are also seeking to create greater awareness of the role, responsibilities and accountabilities of central government, and the contribution they can make to the community outcomes process. To date, this has been on an as-needs-basis or through the annual workshop.

Amongst some local authorities, there continues to be some confusion about the roles of central government, particularly in relation to the influence some agencies have over their regional operational arms, (e.g. the level of direct influence the Ministry of Education has over schools). Management of local government expectations is therefore an ongoing focus to enable effective working relationships based on mutual understanding to be developed and maintained between local and central government.

Impact: Relationship managers are assisting in maintaining the focus on the community outcomes process across local authorities in the eight local government case studies via their contribution in regional interagency forums. However, the need to create greater understanding of central government agencies amongst local government continues. Without this understanding one of the barriers to effective local and central government engagement remains in place.

3. Smoothing engagement

Relationship managers are smoothing engagement between local and central government through facilitating the process at a manageable pace for local and regionally based central government, providing resources (both people and funding), and managing any tensions arising.

The Department needs to manage expectations about facilitating this interaction, given mixed perceptions of their facilitative style. Some local government participants expect relationship managers to ‘forcefully’ encourage central government engagement when their contribution is not forthcoming. Others perceive that the Department lacks the levers to make unwilling central government agencies engage.
Examples of the Department having a significant contribution to the smoothing engagement are:

- COBOP and the relationship manager initiating and setting up a workshop that led to the Healthy Eating Healthy Action initiative in the region, which received significant funds from the Ministry of Health, and has been inserted into the annual plan of a District Health Board
- Rangitikei District Council’s central government forums.

Examples of the Department assisting local authorities in their engagement are:

- Future Taranaki’s Community Outcomes Report launch
- Our Way Southland’s community outcomes launch
- Canterbury Community Plan Group’s central government workshops
- Future Waikato receiving presentations from Statistics New Zealand and the Department of Labour.

Impact: The Department has facilitated engagement between local authorities and central government in six of the eight local government cases. In the main, these engagements with central government are at the formative stage of relationship development. However, this is an important start, as it is through the Department’s smoothing of engagement that longer-term benefits of central and local government working together can be achieved. This is demonstrated by the successes of COBOP, (i.e. progress towards community outcomes, shared understanding between central and local government, and greater information from which to develop regional policy).

4. Sharing good practice learnings

Relationship managers are active in seeking and sharing examples of good practice in relation to the community outcomes process. It is a role that local government find especially useful, given the variation of the community outcomes process across the regions. For example, the sharing of the Canterbury Community Plans Group’s monitoring framework with Our Way Southland to avoid duplication of effort. Relationship managers have also shared Long-Term Council Community Plans, which have been beneficial in assisting others in their development.

Good practice is being shared with local government through both formal and informal mechanisms, (i.e. one-on-one interaction with relationship managers, via regional interagency forums, the annual workshop and the localcentral website).

Impact: There is some evidence that the Department’s sharing information is reducing duplication of effort across local government.

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25 The two local government case studies the Department did not assist had existing and long-term relationships with central government.
8.2 Facilitation gains made

In considering whether the Department’s facilitation is enhancing local and central government engagement in the community outcomes process, we reiterate the factors that constrain the effects of the role, specifically:

- The relatively short time that the Department’s facilitation role has been in place, (i.e. 18 months), and the limited capacity of four relationship managers to cover New Zealand
- There is variation in need among local authorities for assistance in connecting to central government. Some local authorities have invested considerably over the last ten years in developing these relationships, (e.g. Manukau and Waitakere City Councils)
- The advancement of many local authorities in their community outcomes processes before the establishment of the Department’s facilitation role.

The Department has achieved some success in facilitating the local and central government to work together. In summary, out of the eight local government case studies:

- Two case studies show that the Department made a significant contribution to local authorities’ relationships with central government agencies
- Four case studies show that the Department assisted in local authorities’ community outcomes process, by sharing information to meet their monitoring and reporting needs, offering strategic guidance and advice on an as-need-basis, and to a lesser extent connecting to central government agencies
- Two case studies show that the Department had minimal impact in local authorities’ community outcomes processes or relationships with central government, given their advanced stage of their processes and relationships
- All case studies show that the Department keeps them informed about how the community outcomes processes are developing across New Zealand.

Local authorities in six out of the eight local government case studies comment that their overall relationships with central government agencies remain fairly unchanged. With exception of COBOP and to some extent Rangitikei District Council, the Department’s facilitation has mainly contributed to assisting local government in meeting their legislated requirements in the community outcomes process, (i.e. their Long-Term Council Community Plans, and monitoring and reporting requirements). The Department’s facilitation of engagement between local and central government over the last 18 months may not have changed relationships per se, but have at the least created a connection and therefore a foundation for working together in the future.
8.3 Suggested improvements

In considering ways to strengthen and build on the Department’s interaction with local government to assist in the realisation of long-term benefits, consideration needs to be given to:

- Connecting: Identifying the starting points for local authorities in relation to community outcomes and their existing relationships, and building on this base. To be effective, the Department needs to continue the identification of local government needs in relation to community outcomes, and align this with the central government engagement strategy.

- Creating relevance: Managing expectations continues to be critical to overcome the perceived barriers to engagement and to minimise potential frustrations due to misunderstanding about roles and responsibilities.

- Smoothing engagement: Facilitating engagement in relation to local government’s community outcomes prioritises.

Local government participants note that, in the main, interactions with the Department have not substantially changed their relationships with central government in relation to community outcomes. However, the Department has supported local government to remain focused on community outcomes. The Department has minimised some duplication across local government through sharing information in relation to good practice about community outcomes and engagement with central government. Further, the Department has connected some local authorities to central government agencies to enable them to meet their legislated monitoring and reporting requirements. Reflecting the formative stage of the community outcomes process, the Department has contributed to establishing a foundation for future engagement between central and local government. Ongoing, there is a need to manage local government’s expectation of central government to build a common understanding of goals and priorities.
Objective 3: Future Focus of the Department’s Facilitation Role
9. Future Directions

The previous sections described the implementation of and the identification of short-term impacts for central and local government attributed to the Department’s facilitation role. This section highlights central and local government’s needs in seeking to work together on community outcomes over the next 12 months. This future sets the context for considering the future direction of the Department’s facilitation role.

9.1 Introduction

Both local and central government participants in defining their future needs in relation to the community outcomes process and cross-sector relationships restrict their focus to the next 12 months. This short-term view reflects the level of uncertainty across local and central government about what happens next, and how events or relationships will evolve. For local government, this sense of uncertainty is further heightened by next year’s local government elections, which may alter the direction of their local authorities.

Over the next 12 months, the future needs of local and central government are defined by:

- The stage in the community outcomes process: With the completion of the first full Long-Term Council Community Plans, local government is currently focusing on their legislated monitoring and reporting requirements, and for some prioritising and developing action plans to realise their identified community outcomes.
- Existing relationships: Those with more developed central and local government relationships have differing future needs, than those who are seeking to establish these relationships.
- Perceived relevance of the community outcomes process: Central government agencies who are engaged, to some extent, can define their future needs in relation to the community outcomes process and engagement with local government. However, those less engaged central government agencies struggle to define their future needs beyond a general belief of the need for the Department’s facilitation role to keep community outcomes on their ‘radar’.

While there is variation in the future needs of local and central government, common themes emerge for 1) the community outcomes process, and 2) cross-sector engagement.

9.2 Central government’s future needs

Central government participants note the following future needs in relation to the community outcomes process:

- Stocktake of the first full community outcomes process: Systematically capturing learnings from the initial round of the community outcomes processes across New Zealand, (i.e. – what was effective and not, what made a difference, for who?).
  - There is concern that knowledge gained in the first round of the community outcomes process may be lost over the next three to six years as many involved will move into new roles. In the future, there is potential for the process to
become reinvented due to a loss of institutional knowledge. It is suggested therefore that a central repository of knowledge about the community outcomes is developed and is able to be accessed by both central and local government. This could be an extension of the localcentral website.

- Action planning: Placing more focus on the development of action plans for prioritised community outcomes and their implementation. There is concern amongst some central government agencies that action planning is being lost or overlooked, due to the strong emphasis currently placed on monitoring.

- Monitoring and reporting: Continuing to assist and enable local government with the monitoring and reporting for their Long-Term Council Community Plans.

Central government participants comment on the following future needs in seeking to engage with local government in relation to community outcomes:

- Creating greater appreciation: Creating, amongst local government, more understanding and appreciation of central government agencies’ roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and their constraints.

- Avoiding duplication of effort by:
  - Agreeing levels of engagement with local government in relation to community outcomes, (i.e. given the shared nature of some community outcomes across New Zealand is a regional or national level response by central government agencies possible?).

- Reviewing the timing of central government funding rounds to align with local government needs.

- Promoting community outcomes to contracts managers within central government with the aim of ensuring contracts are developed that focus on and foster collaboration in community outcomes.

- Creating linkages: Creating awareness and understanding of how community outcomes and local government needs align with central government agencies’ strategic direction and work plans.

### 9.3 Local government’s future needs

Local government participants note the following future needs in relation to the community outcomes process:

- Clarifying the level of focus in the community outcomes process: Having identified community outcomes at a regional and local level, some local authorities are assessing the level of focus in the community outcomes process going forward, (i.e. should they continue with a regional approach to implement community outcomes, or shift to a more localised focus?). In this context, negotiating potentially divergent interests across local authorities within a region is becoming increasingly important.

- Promoting responsibilities: Promoting to communities that the role of local authorities is to facilitate community outcomes, and that they cannot be held directly responsible if a central government agency does not assist in their realisation.

- Action planning: Prioritising community outcomes and for some developing action plans to realise them. A few local authorities mention the need to get some ‘quick runs’
on the board to demonstrate to their communities that work is progressing around their aspirations.

- Monitoring and reporting: Ongoing support with monitoring and indicator development, in particular being able to access information from central government agencies in a timely and user-friendly manner.

Local government participants comment on the following future needs in seeking to engage with central government in relation to community outcomes:

- Understanding responsibilities: Creating greater appreciation amongst central government agencies of their role as a stakeholder in the community outcomes process, (i.e. that central government has a role and that local government is not solely responsible for the realisation of outcomes over which they may have little influence).
  - Local government is also starting to focus on how to get other stakeholders involved in community outcomes where appropriate, (e.g. community organisations, businesses, and non-government-organisations).

- Connecting: Striving to connect with those central government agencies not already engaged in the community outcomes process. Ideally, connections to central government need to be at the right level, i.e. those with the authority to make decisions and able to assign dedicated resources and/or funding for achieving community outcomes.

- Sharing good practice: Ongoing sharing of information and good practice relating to the community outcomes process and engagement with central government across New Zealand.

- Avoiding consultation overload: Identifying ways to ensure that communities are not over consulted about community outcomes.

9.4 The Department’s future role

Both central and local government participants perceive an ongoing need for the Department’s facilitation role, at least in the short-term, to meet their future needs detailed above. Further, the Department is needed to progress the community outcomes process through its current formative phase:

- Following completion of the Long-Term Council Community Plan by 30 June 2006, the community outcomes process is entering a new phase. Local authorities are developing their monitoring and community outcomes’ reporting frameworks, shifting to an action planning phase, or in the worse case scenario the community outcomes process is stalling due to uncertainty of how to proceed.

- Established relationships between central and local government are, in the main, described as formative and in many cases untested. The process therefore of learning to work together is just beginning. However, other local government participants note that the barriers to engagement have not substantively changed since the establishment of the Department’s role, and thus some central government agencies do not engage.

- Several larger city councils comment that while community outcomes are important in their strategic and policy divisions, they are not yet embedded across their organisations. Likewise, not all central government agencies are engaged, and those
engaged have few formal processes of disseminating information about community outcomes into their organisations. Thus, community outcomes are not yet embedded across and within central government agencies.

The Department’s facilitation role is therefore perceived to be important in:

- Maintaining focus and momentum in the community outcomes process for central government and local government agencies
- Offering guidance and advice into the new phase of the community outcomes process
- Developing more shared understanding of each other goals and constraints
- Continuing the process of connecting, creating relevance and smoothing engagement
- Sharing good practice and learnings.

Central and local government participants did not identify other organisations or mechanisms that could undertake the Department’s facilitation role. There is recognition that the Ministry of Social Development is a proactive contributor to the community outcomes process at a national and regional level. However, the Ministry’s role is seen as complimentary to the Department’s facilitation role, given their narrower focus on social wellbeing.

To meet the evolving needs of central and local government over the next 12 months, the Department’s facilitation role requires further refinement and enhancement to add greater value to central and local government engagement and to move towards realising the longer term benefits of this engagement.

Central and local and government participants also comment that the Department’s role requires regular review. Over time, there is an expectation that the community outcomes process and its associated relationships will become more embedded. Consequently, the needs of the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes will evolve, therefore requiring review of the mechanisms and functions that support it.

In considering future needs in relation to community outcomes and inter-sector engagement, both central and local government identify the need to capture learnings from the first community outcomes process, to prioritise and action community outcomes, and to create greater appreciation of each sector. Further, they agree there is a clear need for a refined version of the Department’s facilitation role to maintain focus and momentum, and to build on the current foundation to move towards the realisation of the longer-term benefits of central and local government engagement.
Conclusions
10. Conclusions

This section draws together the overarching conclusions of the evaluation.

10.1 Implementing the Department’s roles and initiatives

Over the last 18 months, the Department has implemented a number of roles and initiatives to facilitate the central and local government interface regarding community outcomes.

- Relationship managers are the face and driver of this role, as they are the contact point for central and local government.
- Relationship managers are supported by the information sharing and networking based initiatives of the annual workshop, localcentral website, communications material, and issue based initiatives such as the monitoring and reporting seminars.

Initially, the Department’s facilitation role was perceived to lack a clear strategic direction, and wider leadership support. Through interaction with relationship managers’ central and local government came to appreciate the Department’s contribution to the community outcomes process, and their facilitation of the central and local government interface.

10.2 Delivery to Cabinet Paper

Positively, the Department has, in the main, delivered the prescribed requirements in paragraph 8 of the 2004 Cabinet paper by:

- Providing information to central government about the Act through the Central Government Interagency Group and other communication channels.
- Establishing the directory for local government of central government information and contacts: www.localcentral.govt.nz
- Providing, via relationship managers, a contact point for local government to indicate problems or opportunities.
- Establishing mechanisms for central government to share good practice and overcome difficulties, (via Central Government Interagency Group, annual workshops, website, and relationship managers).

To a lesser extent, the Department:

- Offers suggestions to central government agencies on their engagement in the community outcomes process. Suggestions to central government agencies have been reactive, driven by meeting local government’s needs identified by the Department’s relationship managers.
- Collates central government information on the community outcomes process involvement via Central Government Interagency Group’s minutes. However, the
contribution of systematically collating central government involvement in the community outcomes process is unclear in the wider purpose of facilitating central and local government engagement.

10.3 Short-term impacts identified

Over the last 18 months, the gains achievable by the Department in facilitating central and local government in the community outcomes process are constrained by:

- The late establishment of the role in the community outcomes process. Thus, the Department was perceived as having little to offer those local authorities more advanced in their community outcomes process, or who had established relationships with central government.

- The formative stage of the community outcomes process. Thus, many central government agencies and some local authorities were still learning about the process itself and had yet to consider the relationships that evolve from it.

- The significant length of time required to develop effective working relationship across central and local government, (e.g. local authorities with effective central government relationships had taken over ten years to develop them).

- The limited capacity of four relationship managers to effectively engage with all 85 local authorities and across central government agencies.

Within these constraints, the Department has achieved a measure of success.

For central government agencies, the Department has:

- Created awareness of the community outcomes process for 21 central government agencies attending the Central Government Interagency Group.

- Connected and facilitated at least 12 central government agencies to local government to meet local government’s identified needs in the community outcomes process.

For local government, the Department has:

- Identified local government’s needs and issues arising in their delivery of the legislated requirements of the community outcomes process, (i.e. monitoring and reporting).

- Connected and facilitated engagement between local authorities and central government agencies in six out of the eight local government case studies.

Across both central and local government, the Department has shared information about the community outcomes processes occurring across New Zealand. This resulted in a reduction of the duplication in effort for local government. Over time for central government, this information may create the platform on which community outcomes becomes more embedded in their work streams.

The Department’s facilitation of central and local government engagement has centred on meeting local government’s immediate needs. Consequently, the Department has not had
the capacity to focus on creating greater relevance for some central government agencies not engaged in the community outcomes process. To achieve longer term benefits of central and local government working together on the community outcomes process, there is a need to address ongoing misunderstanding about roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and operating constraints. This may be achieved via a more strategic approach to central government engagement.

Overall, the Department has facilitated a level of interaction between central and local government which has established a foundation for future engagement.

10.4 Contribution to long-term benefits

As noted in the Cabinet paper, there are a number of long-term benefits for New Zealand, if central and local government work together on the identification and promotion of community outcomes, namely: better understanding of each others goals and constraints; progressed community outcomes, improved policy development, efficient use of public resources, and reduced compliance costs.

Given the formative stage of the community outcomes process, it is, in the main, too early to see these benefits realised. However, the advanced central and local government engagement in COBOP, as facilitated by the Department’s relationship manager, demonstrates that over time and with assisted facilitation they will emerge, (i.e. in COBOP there is evidence of better understanding of goals and constraints, progressed community outcomes, and better shared information on which regional policy development is based). Note: While the Department’s relationship manager contributes significantly to the realisation of these goals, they do not act in isolation and are building on an already established long–term regional project.

10.5 Future directions

Over the next 12 months, the focus of central and local government in relation to the community outcomes process and cross-sector engagement is similar:

- Shifting of the community outcomes process into an action phase requiring the prioritisation of community outcomes and the development of implementation plans
  - Deciding, for some local authorities, the level of focus of the community outcomes, (i.e. local or regional)
  - Stocktaking the learnings from the first full community outcomes process for future reference by central and local government
- Addressing the barriers to central and local government engagement through better understanding of roles, responsibilities, drivers and accountabilities generally
  - Creating greater awareness amongst central government agencies of their responsibilities as stakeholders in the community outcomes process.

Both local and central government agree there is an ongoing need for the Department’s facilitation role, at least in the short-term (approximately three years). The Department is seen as an important conduit in meeting their needs over the next 12 months, and in
facilitating the community outcomes process through its formative phase to become more established and embedded within local and central government. To achieve the latter, the Department's role requires further refinement.

Over the last 18 months, the Department has delivered to the requirements of the Cabinet paper through the implementation of a number roles and initiatives. The Department has delivered some of the desired short-term outcomes in facilitating central and local government to work together on community outcomes, specifically: a) created awareness amongst central and local government at regional and national level to community outcomes; b) facilitated inter-sector engagement to assist local government deliver on its monitoring and reporting requirements; c) shared differing practices in relation to community outcome processes and engagement thus minimising local government duplication. Given the Department’s focus on meeting local government’s immediate needs in the community outcomes processes, only limited attention was given to creating relevance for non-engaged central government agencies. Overall, the Department has laid the foundation for future engagement between local and central government in relation to the promotion of community outcomes. Going forward, a refined version of the Department’s facilitation role is perceived as critical to overcome continuing barriers to central and local engagement, in particular gaining a shared understanding of roles, priorities and opportunities.
Appendix
Appendices

1. Glossary
2. Evaluation sub-objectives and research questions
3. Evaluation methodology detail
4. Analysis identifying short-term impacts
5. Research tools
# 1. Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Unabbreviated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGIG</td>
<td>Central Government Interagency Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COBOP</td>
<td>Community Outcomes Bay of Plenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>Community outcomes process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIA</td>
<td>Department of Internal Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSG</td>
<td>Deputy Secretaries Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LG</td>
<td>Local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGNZ</td>
<td>Local Government New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTCCP</td>
<td>Long Term Council Community Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEC5</td>
<td>SEEC5 stands for the four wellbeings of social, economic, environment and culture, with the 5 representing the four wellbeing agencies plus the Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLGM</td>
<td>Society of Local Government Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Relationship managers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Evaluation Sub-Objectives and Research Questions

**Objective 1:** To describe the implementation of the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes process, and central government agencies’ engagement with this initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation sub-objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To describe the implementation of the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface regarding COP | - What was the background and rationale of the Department’s role?  
- What was intended for the Department’s role as prescribed by the Cabinet Paper?  
- What was implemented by the Department?  
- How did the Department’s role evolve over the 18 month period? |
| To elicit how central government agencies interacted with and responded to the Department’s interface function? | - Are central government agencies providing information to the Department’s directory?  
- Are central government agencies providing information on their involvement in the community outcomes process to the Department?  
- Are central government agencies informing their relevant staff about the Act?  
- In what other ways, if any, have central government agencies responded to the Department’s role?  
- What are the various ways in which central government agencies engage? |
| To identify lessons learnt and issues arising in the first 18 months of implementation | - What works/worked well? What should be replicated or built on in relation to the Department’s role  
- What does/did not work well? What should be done differently in relation to the Department’s role |

**Objective 2:** To assess the short-term impacts of the Department’s role in facilitating the central and local government interface regarding the community outcomes process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation sub-objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To assess the Department’s role in facilitating the central/local government interface regarding the community outcomes process | - Are central/local government aware of the Department’s role?  
- What do they know about the Department’s role (i.e. the components of the Department’s interface function)?  
- What do they believe the role offers them in seeking to engage with central/local government?  
- What are the benefits of the role?  
- What are the drawbacks of the role?  
- Does the Department have a leadership position in facilitating the central/local government interface regarding the community outcomes process? |
<p>| To assess for central                                                                    | - Were services effectively delivered by the Department? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation sub-objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| government agencies the short-term impacts of the Department’s role in facilitating the central/local government interface regarding the community outcomes process | ▪ What are the impacts of this interaction, e.g.: the Department  
  - Providing information about the Act  
  - Providing information about the community outcomes process  
  - Providing information about the local government sector  
  - Creating an understanding of how the community outcomes process relates to central government  
  - Encouraging central and local government to work together on the community outcomes process  
  - Offering support and advice on issues arising when working with local government on the community outcomes process  
  - Collating information from central government agencies on their involvement in the community outcomes process  
  - Helping central government agencies to share examples of good practice on engaging with local government  
  ▪ What, if any, were the unintended impacts of the Department’s role?  
  ▪ What are suggested improvements to the Department’s role? |
| To assess for local government the short-term impacts of the Department’s role in facilitating the central/local government interface regarding COP | ▪ Which local government interacted with the Department’s role?  
  ▪ How are they interacting with the Department’s role?  
  ▪ Were services effectively delivered by the Department?  
  ▪ What are the impacts of this interaction, e.g.: the Department  
  - Providing information about the Act  
  - Providing information about the community outcomes process  
  - Providing information about the central government sector  
  - Creating an understanding of what central government can bring to the community outcomes process  
  - Helping local government to access central government information  
  - Helping local government to access the ‘right’ people in central government agencies  
  - Encouraging central and local government to work together on the community outcomes process  
  - Offering support and advice on issues arising when working with central government on the community outcomes process  
  - Helping local government to share examples of good practice on engaging with central government  
  ▪ What were the unintended impacts of the Department’s role?  
  ▪ What are suggested improvements to the Department’s role? |
**Objective 3:** To consider the focus of the Department’s facilitation function given the current status of the community outcomes process and the future needs of the sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation sub-objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To consider the future focus of the Department’s facilitation function to meet central/local government needs | • What are the sectors’ needs in facilitating a partnership between central/local governments to achieve mutually desirable community outcomes?  
• To what extent is the Department meeting these needs? Where are the gaps/issues? |
| To identify other mechanisms to facilitate partnership between central/local governments to achieve mutually desirable community outcomes | • What other mechanisms are currently being used to facilitate this partnership (formally or informally)?  
• What are some of the alternative ways that could enable this partnership that is aligned to central/local government needs? |
3. Evaluation Methodology Detail

3.1 Stakeholders consulted

Stakeholders from the Local Government and Community Branch:

- Anne Carter, Deputy Secretary
- Morag Woodley, Director Operations
- Rosalind Plimmer, Strategic Analysis and Information Manager
- John Sutton, Principal Policy Analyst.

Interface team:

- Information Broker: Nigel Ingram
- Policy analysts: Charlie Moore and Kathryn King
- Relationship managers: Barbara MacLennan, Martin Maguire, Anne Shaw, and Suzanne Sinclair.

3.2 Documents reviewed

- Cabinet and policy papers
- Minutes of meetings of CGIG, SEEC5, and Core Contacts Group
- Monthly interface team reports
- Detailed listings of national and regional activities by interface team
- Communication material
- Website review
- Annual workshop evaluations
- Issues paper and other relevant documentation.

3.3 Draft intervention logic

An Evaluation Design Workshop was held on 12 July 2006 with representatives from the Department’s Research and Evaluation Team, the interface team, and Local Government and Community Branch policy team. The purpose of the workshop was to surface the draft intervention logic detailed below:
Draft intervention logic: DIA’s Facilitation Function
12/07/06

Purpose of the logic:
• This is the framework against which we will assess objective 2: To assess the effectiveness of DIA’s role in facilitating the CG/ LG interface regarding COPs

Interpretation of logic
Working from the bottom of the intervention logic in an upwards direction:
• DIA’s facilitation function: lists the activities of the function (yellow boxes)
• Short term outcomes likely to have emerged over the last 18 months are for:
  – Central government department (CG) in green. Note: for CG we will assess the outcomes at both a regional and national level
  – DIA’s facilitation function in blue
  – Local Government (LG) in orange: Note: there are three boxes in this column that are lighter, which require particular consideration as Litmus has added after the workshop. Do they make sense? Are they needed?

• Longer term outcomes likely to emerge over the next 6-12 years are in red above the line

Task:
In reviewing the logic consider:
• Does it make sense? Is the language meaningful?
• What, if anything is missing?
• Is it likely the short term outcomes will have emerged to varying extents over the last 18 months
## Evaluating the Department's Facilitation of Central/Local Government Interface

### Draft intervention logic: DIA's Facilitation Function 12/07/06

**Longer term outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced community wellbeing</th>
<th>Reduced costs</th>
<th>Efficient use of CG &amp; LG Resources</th>
<th>Improved policy LG/CG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LG &amp; CG informed by community voices</td>
<td>CG uses info from COPs to inform their SOI</td>
<td>Ongoing partnership CG/LG &amp; COPs/wider</td>
<td>LG understands CG processes/frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG recognises benefits of engagement</td>
<td>LG-CG activities/info sharing inform COPs &amp; LTCCPs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Short term outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Better co-ordination of CG engagement (sharing good practice)</th>
<th>Leadership via facilitation function (role definition for DIA)</th>
<th>Better co-ordination of LG engagement with CG (sharing of good practice)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CG undertakes activities to enable COPs &amp; their engagement</td>
<td>Identifying issues and facilitating a response including advice to DIA, CG, LG</td>
<td>LG can access CG info/help for COPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG appreciates opportunities of COPs to their dept</td>
<td>CG &amp; LG partnership enabled by DIA</td>
<td>LG is aware of who to find info from CG to enable COPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG appreciates relevance of COPs for their dept/role</td>
<td>CG &amp; LG access DIA’s assistance when needed for COPs</td>
<td>LG is seeks opportunities to engage with CG to enable COPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG understands their responsibility to COP process</td>
<td>CG/LG aware of &amp; understand DIA’s facilitation role</td>
<td>LG appreciates the participative role that CG brings to COPs, LG appreciates opportunities /roles CG can make to COPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG aware of &amp; understand LGA, COP &amp; CG sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CENTRAL GOVT: national and regional level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIA’s facilitation function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkages / advice to DIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information broker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Local Govt
### 3.4 Central government participants

Table 1: Central government agencies and national bodies for local government who participated in the evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wellbeing agencies</th>
<th>Central agencies</th>
<th>National bodies for local government</th>
<th>Other central government agencies</th>
<th>Regionally located central government agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ministry of Social Development</td>
<td>▪ State Services Commission</td>
<td>▪ Local Government New Zealand</td>
<td>▪ Ministry of Education</td>
<td>▪ Ministry of Social Development (6 regions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ministry of Economic Development</td>
<td>▪ Treasury</td>
<td>▪ Society of Local Government Managers</td>
<td>▪ Sport and Recreation New Zealand</td>
<td>▪ Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ministry for the Environment</td>
<td>▪ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Department of Labour</td>
<td>▪ Te Puni Kokiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ministry for Culture and Heritage</td>
<td>▪ Office of the Auditor General</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Statistics New Zealand</td>
<td>▪ District Health Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Tertiary Education Commission</td>
<td>▪ Statistics New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Ministry of Health</td>
<td>▪ State Services Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Ministry of Tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Ministry of Social Development (6 regions) | ▪ Ministry of Education | ▪ Sport and Recreation New Zealand | ▪ Department of Labour | ▪ Statistics New Zealand |
| ▪ Ministry of Social Development | ▪ Ministry of Education | ▪ Te Puni Kokiri | ▪ District Health Board | ▪ Statistics New Zealand |
| ▪ Ministry for the Environment | ▪ Ministry for Culture and Heritage | ▪ District Health Board | ▪ Statistics New Zealand | ▪ State Services Commission |

| 4 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
3.5 Case selection

The following table details cases selected against case selection criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Activity or regional focus</th>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>1:1: many</th>
<th>Engage DIA</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>RM Region</th>
<th>Engage COPs</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Way Southland</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Well led cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Plans group</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>Medium to high</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Challenges local politics</td>
<td>DIA role to manage this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangitikei District Council</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Lower central</td>
<td>High: Wgtn engagement CG</td>
<td>Clear role DIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Taranaki</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Lower central</td>
<td>Advanced COPs</td>
<td>Future focus of interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Futures Waikato</td>
<td>Region/activity</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Upper central</td>
<td>High: e.g. of LG and CG working tog on COPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COBOP Working Group and Monitoring and Reporting Group</td>
<td>Activity/region</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Upper central</td>
<td>High: e.g. of LG and CG working tog on COPs</td>
<td>Future focus of interface function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manukau City Council</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitakere City Council</td>
<td>Activity/local</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1 to many</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>High</td>
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</table>
Cases by interviews conducted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Participants within same local authority</th>
<th>Participants across local authority</th>
<th>Regionally based central government people</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Way Southland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury Community Plans group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangitikei District Council</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Taranaki</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Futures Waikato</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COBOP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manukau City Council</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitakere City Council</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of interviews</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local government cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local government cases</th>
<th>Council coverage</th>
<th>No of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our Way Southland</td>
<td>Southland District Council Environment Southland Invercargill City Council</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canterbury Community Plans group</td>
<td>Christchurch City Council Waimakariri District Council Hurunui District Council</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangitikei District Council</td>
<td>Palmerston North City Council Rangitikei District Council Wanganui District Council</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Taranaki</td>
<td>Taranaki Regional Council Stratford District Council New Plymouth District Council South Taranaki District Council</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Futures Waikato</td>
<td>Hauraki District Council South Waikato District Council Hamilton City Council Choosing Futures Waikato</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COBOP</td>
<td>Tauranga City Council Whakatane District Council Rotorua City Council Opotiki District Council Environment Bay of Plenty</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manukau City Council</td>
<td>Manukau City Council</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitakere City Council</td>
<td>Waitakere City Council</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Analysis to Identify Short-Term Impacts

4.1 Central government agencies

Central government agencies’ starting point for interaction with the Department is mapped in the diagram below based on the perceived relevance of the community outcomes process and their level of engagement with local government. Two key clusters of central government agencies emerge: early engagers and non-engagers.

- Early engagers: These agencies were aware of the community outcomes process, and had undertaken a number of initiatives with local government before the establishment of the Department’s facilitation role. The wellbeing agencies, in particular, fit into this category:
  - Ministry for Culture and Heritage ran a series of workshops on cultural wellbeing
  - Ministry for the Environment had developed a website about environmental wellbeing
  - Ministry of Social Development had established Regional Social Development Managers who were engaging with local authorities around social wellbeing
  - Ministry of Economic Development had established a website
  - Statistics New Zealand conducted indicator workshops in 2003.

- Non-engagers: This is a mixed group of central government agencies who, in common, had not engaged with local government on community outcomes.

Following interaction with the Department’s relationship managers, the central government agencies may be clustered as shown in the diagram below.
After interaction with Department

Detailed below is a description of each cluster and its size, (i.e. the number of central government agencies included in this evaluation who fit in the cluster), together with a summary on whether the Department:

- Significantly contributed to their engagement with local government, (i.e. without the Department the engagement would not have occurred)
- Assisted with existing or new initiatives, (i.e. the initiatives may have occurred without the Department's help)
- Made little difference to their level of engagement.

**Significant contribution**

**Supported engagers (four agencies):** Organisationally, these central government agencies are supportive of the community outcomes process, and are engaging with local government in relation to community outcomes. This group includes the early engagers. The Department significantly contributed to these supported engagers' interaction with central government via:

- Identifying local government needs in relation to monitoring and reporting and developing an appropriate response
- Establishing new connections through regionally based central government agencies forums and presenting to regional staff about the community outcomes process, the Act and local government.
Assisted

Supported engagers (four agencies): The Department assisted these supported engagers, including the wellbeing agencies, in their existing initiatives with local government.

Unsupported engagers (two agencies): These are regionally based individuals who are supportive of the community outcomes process and who are themselves engaging to some extent with local government via their presence on regional forums. However, this engagement is not supported by their wider organisation at a national level, and the sustainability of this engagement is uncertain.

- The Department assisted these people to have greater understanding of the community outcomes process through an invitation to attend the Central Government Interagency Group, and regional forums chaired by local government.

Supporters (two agencies): Two supporters are national lobby groups for local government and have existing links into central government agencies. In this role, one is an advocate for local government and active in prompting engagement on community outcomes. The other has been less involved in the community outcomes process.

- The Department has assisted on a number of joint initiatives, (e.g. Maori engagement and monitoring and reporting seminars). Both perceive the Department as an invaluable source of information and intelligence about local government’s needs.

Made little difference

Supporters (four agencies): The other four supporters are central agencies who in the main support the community outcomes process given its long-term benefits for New Zealand. These agencies do not directly engage with local government, but tend to support others and wider mechanisms and initiatives to achieve this.

- The Department, in this context, made no difference to their engagement with local government. These agencies tend to support the Department’s role; although they perceive there is room to further enhance its impact.

Connected but not engaged (four agencies): These agencies had very limited involvement with local government about community outcomes before the establishment of the Department’s role.

- The Department made no difference to their level of engagement. While these agencies currently attend the Central Government Interagency Group, they perceive that the community outcomes process is of little direct relevance. Two of these agencies have regional operational arms who are seen as the more appropriate focus for engagement with local government across a range of issues.

Unconnected (estimated 10 agencies): These are the ten central government agencies who do not attend the Central Government Interagency Group. It is possible that some or all of these agencies are engaging with local government on community outcomes. However, their absence suggests that they are not connected, and perhaps do not appreciate the relevance of the community outcomes process and engaging with local government.

- The Department made no difference as unconnected.
4.2 Local government

Detailed below are the short-term impacts identified for local government relating to the Department’s facilitation of central government engagement. These short-term impacts were identified via the eight local government case studies. It highlights the variation of impact across local government depending on their stage in the community outcomes process and their existing relationships with central government at the time the Department’s role was established.

The following diagram illustrates for the eight local government case studies the contribution of the Department in facilitating engagement with central government against the level of interaction with the Department. It highlights that the Department has:

- Significantly contributed in two local government case studies towards enabling central government engagement
- Assisted local government in four case studies
- Made little difference in two of the cases studies reflecting their level of need.

**Significant contribution**

**COBOP** commenced in March 2005 between local and central government in the Bay of Plenty region seeking to encourage collaboration in the community outcomes process. The Department’s relationship manager co-ordinates COBOP’s governance and working party groups. The relationship manager has significantly contributed to COBOP by:
Identifying community outcomes of mutual interest for central and local government within the group. For example, the relationship manager initiated a workshop that led to the Healthy Eating Healthy Action initiative in the region, which received significant funds from the Ministry of Health, and has been inserted into the annual plan of a District Health Board.

Co-ordinating and keeping the COBOP working party on track. This has included taking a firm line and highlighting relevance when the group has lost traction, (e.g. bringing back into the group one central government agency who was pulling away from the forum).

Making a complex process easy, by including key people, and making it easier for people to get together. Examples included introducing a new central government agency to the table, inviting another to do a road-show in the region, and talking to central government agencies about developing guidance materials.

**Rangitikei District Council** undertook two workshops with central government agencies from Wellington about their community outcomes. The Department’s relationship managers made a significant contribution by:

- Identifying central government people and encouraging them to attend the workshops.
- Creating relevance for central government agencies in attending these workshops.

While Rangitikei District Council is appreciative of the Department’s assistance, in both workshops, the expectations of local and central government were not met:

- At the first focus group, Rangitikei District Council expected central government to assist with the identification of their community outcomes, as similar to other focus groups held in the region. However, central government felt it was inappropriate to be ‘dictating’ community outcomes to a region.
- In the second workshop, Rangitikei District Council wanted to inform central government about their identified community outcomes, and to find out how central government would assist in delivering them. Central government agencies, however, were reluctant to ‘sign up’ through this workshop.

- Making the process easy by connecting Rangitikei District Council with central government agencies, advising the best time of year to hold the workshop to achieve good turn out, and assisting with venue hire and catering.

**Assisted**

**Choosing Futures Waikato** is a collaboration of the 12 local authorities in the Waikato area to identify, define and implement regional community outcomes. The Department’s relationship managers were involved in Choosing Futures Waikato from its inception. The relationship managers assisted via noting potential linkages to central government and identifying relevant agencies to invite to present at the Choosing Futures Waikato meetings, (e.g. Statistics New Zealand and Department of Labour).

**Our Way Southland** is a regional initiative with the objective of sharing resources to facilitate a common approach to regional issues. The community outcomes process was well advanced before the establishment of the Department’s facilitation role, and a team leader was employed to coordinate the project. The relationship manager supported this role by:

- Informing when central government agencies were coming into the region, (e.g. the Ministry for Culture and Heritage’s road-show)
Advising on what monitoring information is held by central government, and about the approach being used by Canterbury Community Plans Groups.

**Waitakere City Council** is a large metro council with a long history of community engagement and interactions with central government to realise community outcomes. In this environment, the Department’s relationship manager has assisted by:

- Offering strategic steerage at their Wellbeing Network Steering Group and Community Outcomes Action Planning and Progress, (i.e., if the meeting is becoming ‘bogged down’ the relationship manager lifts the focus back to the broader vision of community outcomes)
- Sharing Waitakere City Council’s good practice through collaborating on the development and distribution of the resource ‘Putting pen to paper’, which contains information about how to create partnership agreements that work.

**Canterbury Community Plans Group** pre-dates the Act and is a collaboration to develop a co-ordinated approach to the development of community outcomes, and regional indicators. The Department’s relationship manager noted that the group was losing momentum and sought to re-energise it by holding two workshops with central and local government. The workshops were of limited success as their purpose was perceived to be not clearly defined, and thus no tangible outcomes emerged. Further, participants perceive it duplicated an earlier workshop facilitated by Canterbury Community Plans Group to create connect local and central government.

**Made little difference**

**Future Taranaki** is a collective of local authorities established after the enactment of the Act to jointly identify community outcomes. Future Taranaki was well advanced in the community outcomes process before the establishment of the Department’s facilitation role. The Department’s relationship manager is active in the region attending Zone Meetings and the Future Taranaki Partners Group. However, local government are less receptive to advice as they are already well connected locally and regionally with central government. The Department funded the launch of the Future Taranaki Community Outcomes Report, and assisted in getting a Minister to attend the launch. However, local government participants note that the launch of Future Taranaki was particularly important for the region, so it would have happened regardless.

**Manukau City Council** is a large metro council with a long history of engaging with their community to surface community outcomes, and in working with central government that pre-dates the Act. Manukau City Council was therefore well advanced in the community outcomes process and saw no need for help from the Department. However, they perceived the Department’s role to be important in assisting smaller councils, (i.e. Franklin and Papakura District Councils with their community outcomes processes), given their more limited resources and capacity.\(^{26}\)

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\(^{26}\) These District Councils were not included in the case studies; therefore we are unable to confirm this.
5. Research Tools

Informed Consent Form

I (insert name) ……………………………………………………………………………………………

of (insert address) …………………………………………………………………………..agree to participate
in the evaluation of Department of Internal Affairs’ role in facilitating engagement between
central and local government on the community outcomes process, as outlined in the
information sheet given to me by the Department of Internal Affairs and Litmus.

I understand that:

- My participation in the evaluation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time up until
  the reporting stage. If I withdraw, I can request that any data collected from me be
  returned or destroyed.

- Whether or not I participate will not affect my relationship with the Department of
  Internal Affairs, or other central and local government departments or agencies in any
  way.

- The evaluation process followed by Litmus will seek to keep my information
  anonymous. That is, I will not be named in the evaluation report.

- The interview with my permission will be taped, and may be transcribed.

- Tapes, transcripts, notes, and summaries will be stored securely at Litmus.

I have read this consent form, and been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give my
consent to participate in this evaluation.

Participant’s signature: __________________________

Date: ___________________
Evaluating DIA’s Role in Facilitating the CG/LG Interface re COP

Interview Guide – Local Government

This interview guide is indicative of the relevant subject matter to be covered. It is designed to allow freedom of any additional relevant topics, which may arise during the interview to be discussed. (Note: Acronyms will not be used in discussions)

For interviewer: evaluation objectives
1. Describe the implementation of DIA’s role in facilitating the CG/LG interface, and CG’s engagement (i.e. what DIA has done?)
2. Assess the effectiveness of the role? (i.e. what was the effect?)
3. Consider the future focus of DIA’s role? (i.e. what is the future focus?)

Introduction
- Introduce self/Litmus
  - Purpose: Evaluate the Department of Internal Affairs’ role in encouraging central and local government to work together on the community outcomes process (COP)
  - Interview has three sections: 1) your perceptions of the benefits and challenges of working with central government, 2) your council’s interactions with DIA in seeking to work with central government on COPs and its effectiveness over the last 18 months; and 3) the future needs of the sector and DIA’s future role
- Informed consent
- Time: around one hour
- Outcomes – letter of thanks

1. Context: Perceptions of CG and LG working together
   As you are aware one of the intents of the Local Government Act (LGA) is to encourage local and central government to work together on the community outcomes. Before the introduction of the LGA, to what extent did you council work with central government on local and regional issues?
   - How has this changed with the introduction of LGA?
   - What are the benefits of working with central government?
   - What are the challenges of working with central government?
   - What is your role in relation to working with central government??

2. Use of DIA and Effectiveness
   In your own words, describe the Department of Internal Affairs’ role in the community outcomes process.
   - What are the benefits of role?
   - What are the challenges of role?

Network map
   On this page, placing your council at the centre, draw the central government departments your council has had dealings with about community outcomes in the last 18 months?
   - What, if anything, was DIA’s role in establishing or fostering these connections?
(Probes as below)

Over the last 18 months, what other involvement has your council had with DIA around LGA, COP, and in working with central government on the community outcomes process.

For each interaction ask:

- What prompted this?
- What was the purpose or aim of this interaction?
- What worked?
- What didn’t work?
- Overall, how would you rate DIA on service delivery? (i.e. availability, accessibility, being timely, quality, efficiency)
- What happened as a result of working with DIA?
  - For the event/issue?
  - For your council?
  - For engagement with central government on COPs?
  - What, if anything else happened that you didn’t expect?

What other initiatives have DIA implemented to encourage and support local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process? (SHOWCARD A)

- Purpose of initiative?
- Working? Not working?

Reflecting back over the last 18 months, how has the Department’s role changed in encouraging local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process?

Using this scale (Showcard B), how would you rate the overall usefulness of the Department of Internal Affairs’ role in encouraging local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process, and on the attributes listed below.

For each attribute probe out:

- For what reasons did you give this rating?
3. Future needs of the sector

Over the next 12 months, what are the needs of local and central government in seeking to work together on the community outcomes? Needs over the next 6 years as COP come around again?

- What will enable local and central government to work together around the implementation of the LTCCPS, and community outcomes?
- What will hinder it?
- What is DIA’s role in meeting these future needs?

Close: Other comments/feedback? Thanks and next steps
A: The Department of Internal Affair’s initiatives to encourage local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship Managers</td>
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<td>Information Broker</td>
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<td>SSC electronic discussion group</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual local and central government workshops</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications materials: At the Interface newsletter, brochures on their role, LGA and community outcomes process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and reporting training seminars and workshops</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
B: Rate the Department of Internal Affairs’ usefulness on a scale from…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all useful</th>
<th>Not useful</th>
<th>So so</th>
<th>Useful</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Overall rating of DIA’s usefulness in this role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing information about the LGA to local government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing information about COP to local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information about the central government sector to local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating an understanding of what central government can bring to COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping local government to access central government information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping local government to access the ‘right’ people in central government departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging central and local government to work together on COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering support and advice on issues arising when working with central government on COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping local government to share examples of good practice on engaging with central government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluating DIA’s Role in Facilitating the CG/LG Interface re COP

Interview Guide – Central Government

This interview guide is indicative of the relevant subject matter to be covered. It is designed to allow freedom of any additional relevant topics, which may arise during the interview to be discussed. (Note: acronyms will not be used in discussions)

High level overview of objectives
1. Describe the implementation of DIA’s role in facilitating the CG/LG interface, and CG’s engagement (i.e. what DIA has done?)
2. Assess the effectiveness of the role? (i.e. what was the effect?)
3. Consider the future focus of DIA’s role? (i.e. what is the future focus?)

Introduction
- Introduce self/Litmus
- Purpose:
  - Evaluate the Department of Internal Affairs’ role in encouraging central and local government to work together on the community outcomes process (COP)
  - Understand central government actions to inform their staff about LGA, and inform DIA about their involvement with COP
  - Interview will cover 3 areas: 1) understanding your dept and role re LGA and COPs, 2) your department interactions with DIA and its effectiveness over the last 18 months; and 3) the future needs of the sector and DIA’s future role
- Informed consent
- Time: around one hour
- Outcomes – letter of thanks

1. Context: Perceptions of CG and LG working together
   Describe at a high level how the Local Government Act (LGA) and its intent of local and central government working together on the community outcomes process fits with your department.
   - What are the benefits?
   - What are the challenges?
   - What is your role in relation to the LGA and COP?

2. Use of DIA and Effectiveness
   In your own words, describe the Department of Internal Affairs’ role on the Community outcomes process.
   - Benefits of role?
   - Challenges of role?

Over the last 18 months, what has been your department’s involvement with DIA around LGA, COP, and in working with local government on the community outcomes process.

For each interaction ask:
- What prompted this?
- What was the purpose or aim of this interaction?
What worked?
What didn’t work?
Overall, how would you rate DIA on service delivery? (i.e. availability, accessibility, being timely, quality, efficiency)
What happened as a result of working with DIA?
  - For the event/issue?
  - For your department?
  - For engagement with local government on COPs?
  - What, if anything else happened that you didn’t expect?

What other initiatives have DIA implemented to encourage and support local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process? (SHOWCARD A)
  - Purpose of initiative?
  - Working? Not working?

Reflecting back over the last 18 months, how has the Department’s role changed in encouraging local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process?

Using this scale (Showcard B), how would you rate the overall usefulness of the Department of Internal Affairs’ role in encouraging local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process, and the attributes listed below.

  For each attribute probe out:
  - For what reasons did you give this rating?

3. CG delivery to Cab Paper

In what other ways, not already mentioned, does your department provide information to DIA on its involvement around COP and engagement with local government on COs.

We have discussed that DIA provides information about LGA, COP, and local government to central government department. How is this information passed on to relevant staff in your department?
  - How do staff use this information? How does it fit with their roles?
4. Future needs of the sector

Over the next 12 months, what are the needs of local and central government in seeking to work together on the community outcomes? Needs over the next 6 years as COP come around again?

- What will enable local and central government to work together around the implementation of the LTCCPS, and community outcomes?
- What will hinder it?
- What is DIA’s role in meeting these future needs?

Close: Other comments/feedback? Thanks and next steps
A: The Department of Internal Affair’s Initiatives to encourage local and central government to work together on the community outcomes process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Aware (please tick)</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.localcentral.govt.nz">www.localcentral.govt.nz</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Broker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSC electronic discussion group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual local and central government workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications materials: At the Interface newsletter, brochures on their role, LGA and community outcomes process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and reporting training seminars and workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B: Rate the Department of Internal Affairs’ usefulness on a scale from....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all useful</th>
<th>Not useful</th>
<th>So so</th>
<th>Useful</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall rating of DIA’s usefulness in this role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Providing information about the LGA to central government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing information about COP to central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information about the local government sector to central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating an understanding of how COP relates to central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging central and local government to work together on COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering support and advice on issues arising when working with local government on COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collating information from central government departments on their involvement in COP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping central government departments to share examples of good practice on engaging with local government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Glossary:
- **DIA** = Department of Internal Affairs
- **LGA** = Local Government Act 2002
- **COP** = the community outcomes process