

2012-2022 Ten Year Plan - Community Benefit Assessment Tool

REPORT SUMMARY

FROM Katina Conomos - Senior Strategic Planner

Report Purpose:

For Decision

Significance of Decision:

Significant *Non-Significant*

Issue

In October 2011 the Council will be asked to consider the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan draft work programme and budget, as well as the rates requirements and cumulative impact of prior strategy and policy decisions.

The Community Benefit Assessment Tool was used in the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan as a means of assessing the overall 'community benefit' from any particular council good, service or project and therefore to assist the Council in the prioritisation of its work programme.

In preparation for the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan staff have reviewed the Tool to ensure the methodology will meet new legislative requirements, other new directions and in particular the new Council Outcomes. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an overview of what the Tool is and what it does.

Factors to Consider

- The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is expressly designed to ensure that community views and preferences are taken into account when prioritising the Council's forward work programme, which is done as part of its Ten Year Plan process.
- The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is part of the Ten Year Plan Project and is about ensuring Council decision making is supported by robust information.
- Whilst the Tool is a means to support the Council's decision making, it is still the Council's prerogative to determine a different course of action with regards to a good or service, providing the rationale for the decision is explained.

Options

The following options exist:

Option A - Recommended Option: Council Endorse the Revised Community Benefit Assessment Tool

The Community Benefit Assessment Tool has been reviewed by staff to take into account recent legislative changes, new directions (such as the Blueprint), the Council's Direction and the new Risk Management Framework.

Option B: Council Determine Other Means of Assessment and Prioritisation

The Council may choose to determine another means of prioritising the work programme.

Option C: Council Apply 2009-2019 Community Benefit Assessment Indicators

The Council could choose to use the Tool, as it was, prior to the recent adjustments made outlined in Option A. Option C is outlined in detail on pages 411 - 426 of the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan.

Recommendations

That the Thames-Coromandel District Council:

1. Receives the report.
2. Determines that it believes it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with the provisions of Section 79 of the Act determines that it does not require further information prior to making a decision on this matter.
3. Notes the purpose of the Community Benefit Assessment Tool in the development of the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan.
4. Instructs staff to use the Community Benefit Assessment Tool as information to assist in the prioritisation of the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan draft work programme for Council's consideration in October 2011.

TO Thames-Coromandel District Council
FROM Katina Conomos - Senior Strategic Planner
APPROVED BY Steve Ruru - Chief Executive
DATE 20 June 2011
SUBJECT **2012-2022 Ten Year Plan - Community Benefit Assessment Tool**

Report Purpose:

For Decision

Significance of Decision:

Significant *Non-Significant*

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In preparation for the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan staff have reviewed the Tool to ensure the methodology will meet new legislative requirements, other new directions and in particular the new Council Outcomes. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an overview of what the Tool is and what it does.

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4. Instructs staff to use the Community Benefit Assessment Tool as information to assist in the prioritisation of the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan draft work programme for Council's consideration in October 2011.

Background

1. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool was used in the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan as a means of assessing the overall community benefit from any particular council good, service or project. It was introduced to enable the Council to make informed prioritisation decisions.
2. The Tool achieves this by first assessing the contribution each good or service makes to the achievement of the council outcomes. The good or service is then considered in terms of what information we have about how important the community think it is.
3. The two factors are then used to determine an overall 'community benefit factor'.
4. This factor is intended to provide the Council with information to support its decision making when it is reviewing the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan work programme and associated budgets. This review is due to occur in October 2011.

Statutory Requirements

The Local Government Act 2002 obliges Council to consider community views and preferences when making decisions.

The development of activity plans and the resulting levels of service, as well as specific projects or deliverables within these should be supported by a robust rationale for engagement in the activity. The chosen level of service should reflect effective consultation with the community and recognition of the council outcomes, which set out what the Council will contribute to the community's aspirations.

1. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is expressly designed to ensure that community views and preferences are taken into account when prioritising the Council's forward work programme, which it does as part of its Ten Year Plan process.
2. Having the Tool is not a legislative requirement, however, use of the Tool ensures that a customer focus is demonstrably interwoven throughout the setting of Council's work programme and therefore supports the Council in meeting its decision making requirements.
3. Whilst the Tool is a means to support the Council's decision making, it is still the Council's prerogative to determine a different course of action with regards to a good or service, providing the rationale for the decision is explained.

Relevant Policy and Plans (include relevant local, regional and national policies and plans as relevant)

4. The Tool is engineered to demonstrate, for each project or service, contribution to Council Outcomes and the resulting community benefit. This enables comparison between projects and services across the Council and is a means of assisting the Council giving effect to its Direction.
5. An objective of the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan Project was to ensure good, integrated decision making, which involves getting the decision-making sequence right. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is part of the Ten Year Plan Project, and is about ensuring Council decision making is supported by robust information.
6. In April 2011 the Council endorsed its 2012-2022 Financial Sustainability Strategy in principle. This strategy sets the financial parameters (and targets) within which the Council intends to deliver its 2012-2022 work programme. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool will be useful to help the Council make trade-off decisions about which services and projects it should deliver within these parameters.

Committee and Community Boards Recommendations

7. Not relevant to this report

Strategic Fit

Strategic Direction	Comment
Choosing Futures	Choosing Futures are statements of what communities want to achieve now and in the future. The Choosing Futures are not prioritised. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool assesses the overall contribution of a Council good or service against 'community benefit' and determines a means of prioritising delivery of these goods and services.
Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint	The Blueprint is a new direction. The review of the Community Benefit Assessment Tool has considered this, and further information is noted in Option A.
Council Direction	Council's Direction is fundamental to the Community Benefit Assessment Tool. The Tool is intended to assist the prioritisation of the Council's forward work programme to align to the Council's Direction.
Ten Year Plan	The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is part of the Ten Year Plan project.

Factors to Consider

Community Views & Preferences

8. The Council is obliged to consider community views and preferences when making decisions.
9. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool is a means of assessing the overall community benefit from any particular council good, service or project.
10. It is expressly designed to ensure that community views and preferences are taken into account when prioritising the Council's forward work programme, which it does as part of its Ten Year Plan process.
11. The Tool achieves this by first assessing the contribution each good or service makes to the achievement of the council outcomes. The good or service is then considered in terms of what information we have about how important the community think it is. For instance, how strongly this item is expressed by the community in ratepayers surveys, community plans and submissions to the Council.
12. The Tool is fundamentally based on community views and preferences and is about ensuring those views and preferences are considered in Council decision making.

Compliance with Legislative Requirements

13. As noted in the Statutory Requirements section of this report, the Tool assists the Council in meeting its legislative requirements with regards to decision making.

Activity Plan Implications

14. It is through Activity Plans that the work programme of the Council is determined.
15. Any changes to the work programme at any stage in the process have to be reflected in the Activity Plans.
16. The scope of the Community Benefit Assessment Tool impacts all activities of the Council.

Budget Implications

17. There are no direct budget implications associated with having the Community Benefit Assessment Tool, however, the Tool can be used to inform which budgets will be provided for. It will be useful to help the Council make decisions about which services and projects it should deliver within a set budget (or fiscal) envelope.
18. For matters of convenience, the Tool is prepared alongside the development of Activity Budgets.

Risks and Opportunities

19. The Tool is a means to ensure that projects and programmes are assessed in terms of their degree of risk (for instance environmental harm, system failure etc). The degree of risk feeds into the 'Overall Delivery Priority' rating in the Tool.
20. To recognise the organisation's new Risk Management Framework, the Community Benefit Assessment Tool: Delivery Factor (see **Attachment B**: figure 4) has been updated to include a component on 'operational risk'. The language used in this new component is consistent with the new Risk Management Framework.

Options

21. The following options exist:

Option A - Recommended Option: Council Endorse the Revised Community Benefit Assessment Tool

22. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool has been reviewed by staff to take into account recent legislative changes, new directions (such as the Blueprint), the Council's Direction and the new Risk Management Framework.

Option B: Council Determine Other Means of Assessment and Prioritisation

23. The Council may choose to determine another means of prioritising the work programme.

Option C: Council Apply 2009-2019 Community Benefit Assessment Indicators

24. The Council could choose to use the Tool, as it was, prior to the recent adjustments made outlined in Option A. Option C is outlined in detail on pages 411 - 426 of the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan.

Assessment of Options

25. The assessment of options are as follows:

Option	Advantages and Benefits	Disadvantages and Costs	Impact on capacity to meet current and future needs	Integrated and Efficient Promotion of Council Outcomes
A - Rec. Option - Council Endorse the Revised Community Benefit Assessment Tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Benefit Assessment Tool Assists the Council in meeting its legislative requirements. • It provides the rationale for determining priority for Council's forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aside from staff time there are no direct costs associated with the Community Benefit Assessment Tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tool is a means of ensuring that the needs of current and future ratepayers are considered equally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By assessing each project/service against the Council Outcomes, the Tool supports the promotion of the Outcomes.

Option	Advantages and Benefits	Disadvantages and Costs	Impact on capacity to meet current and future needs	Integrated and Efficient Promotion of Council Outcomes
	<p>work programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tool will assist the Council in making prioritisation decisions within set fiscal parameters. • The outputs of the Tool will support the Council in future decision making. • This option builds on the success of the model used in 2009. 			
B - Other means of prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option could give rise to a better means of determining community benefit and prioritisation of Council's work programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new option would be untested. • The costs of this option are not known. • This option is likely to defer staff from existing work programmes and may impact Ten Year Plan project timeframes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option would have the potential to ensure the needs of current and future ratepayers are considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option would have the potential to promote the Council Outcomes.
C - Use 2009 Community Benefit Assessment Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When compared to the other options, there are no specific advantages to this option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2009 Tool is considered to be out of date, in particular as it assesses benefit against Choosing Futures rather than the new Council Outcomes. • Therefore, it wouldn't reflect Council's new direction. • Aside from staff time there are no direct financial costs associated with using the 2009 Tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tool is a means of ensuring that the needs of current and future ratepayers are considered equally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This option does not support the promotion of the current Council Outcomes.

Option A - Recommended Option: Council Endorse the Revised Community Benefit Assessment Tool

26. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool was used in 2009, and is considered by staff as a robust means through which to assess community benefit and risk prioritisation of Council's forward work programme.
27. The Community Benefit Assessment Tool has been reviewed to take into account recent legislative changes, new directions (such as the Blueprint), the Council's Direction and the new Risk Management Framework.
28. As a consequence of the Local Government Amendment Act 2010 changes, there was a need to change the Community Benefit Assessment Tool to speak to the new Council Outcomes, rather than the previous Community Outcomes (known as Choosing Futures).
29. The new Council Outcome indicators were developed with input from Strategic Planning Team, the Group Manager, Service Delivery and the Manager Compliance and Policy, Jacqui Ellis for her knowledge regarding how the Community Benefit Assessment Tool works.
30. The revised outcome indicators are included as **Attachment A**.
31. The new outcome indicators do not have an equal number of indicators across the three Council Outcomes, therefore, the Tool includes a weighting to even this out.
32. To recognise the place of the Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint in the organisation's revised Performance Management Framework, a check box question has been included in the Tool.
33. It simply requires, for each project, the Activity Manager to indicate whether this project is consistent with the Blueprint (yes/no or not applicable).
34. Whilst this doesn't feed into the overall 'community benefit factor', it has been designed as a check point or 'catch all' to trigger a discussion if a project is being entered into the Tool that is not aligned to the Blueprint directions.
35. To recognise the organisation's new Risk Management Framework, the Delivery Factor (see **Attachment B**: figure 4) has been updated to include a component on 'operational risk'. The language used in this new component is consistent with the new Risk Management Framework.
36. Although it was intended to include operating projects in the Tool for the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan this didn't eventuate. For the 2012-2022 iteration, it is again intended to assess the Community Benefit Factor of operating projects. Examples of operating projects are the District Plan Review and Positive Aging Strategy.
37. All other factors and indicators were considered and tested, but have remained unchanged as there was no compelling reason to make any further adjustments.

Option B: Council Determine Other Means of Assessment and Prioritisation

38. The Council may choose to determine another means of prioritising the work programme.
39. An example of another option is to further prioritise the Council Outcomes. Whilst the Council Outcomes do provide a degree of prioritisation of Council's activities and services, this could be expressed more explicitly should the Council determine to do so.
40. The Council could instruct staff to undertake further direction setting and prioritisation exercises with the Council around the Council Outcomes.
41. Staff would caution that whatever approach is chosen, an essential part of ensuring legislative compliance is to ensure a customer focus is demonstrated throughout Council planning and decision making.
42. Furthermore, the Community Benefit Assessment Tool provides a range of factors for the work programme to be considered against, including:

- Contribution to Council Outcomes
- Community priority, including the number of people benefiting, ratepayer surveys and consistency with community plans
- Assessment of risk

Any alternative would should be as robust, or an improvement to the current model.

Option C: Council Apply 2009-2019 Community Benefit Assessment Indicators

43. The Council could choose to use the Tool, as it was, prior to the adjustments made outlined in Option A.
44. Option C is outlined in detail on pages 411 - 426 of the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan.
45. The primary difference is that the 2009 Tool assessed each project against its contribution to 'Community Outcomes' (or Choosing Futures).
46. Choosing Futures are still relevant to Council's decision making, and still maintain a place in the Council's performance management framework.
47. However, the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Act 2010 introduced the requirement for the Council to determine its contribution to the 'community's aspirations'. As such, staff view is that it is more appropriate for the assessment to be made against the new Council Outcomes.

Recommended Option

48. The recommended option is **Option A**.
49. The 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan Project has an objective of continuous improvement. Option A builds on a successful model and is seeking to improve this due to changes in the environment.

Identification of Inconsistent Decisions

50. This is not an inconsistent decision.

Significance Assessment

51. Under the Council's Determining Significance Policy, a decision in accordance with the recommendation(s) is considered to have a high degree of significance.
52. The recommended decision is considered significant because it is intended to support Council's decision making for it's 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan work programme, the scope of which impacts the entire community.

Threshold	Yes/No	Comments
Involves more than \$5,000,000 or more budgeted expenditure	No	The decision being sought does not explicitly have a monetary implication.
Involves \$500,000 or more unbudgeted expenditure	No	The decision being sought does not explicitly have a monetary implication.
The decision impacts by increasing individual rates levies by 10%	No	The decision being sought does not explicitly have a monetary implication.

Criteria	1-5	Comments
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The extent and quality of the decisions impact on individuals and/or groups.	5	The decision being sought concerns the use of a Tool to support Council's future decision making. Whilst this decision itself is not considered significant, the Tool will be used as one means to prioritise the Council's forward work programme for the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan and therefore triggers this particular significance criteria.
The number of people affected.	5	Whilst this decision itself is not considered significant, the Tool will be used as one means to prioritise the Council's forward work programme for the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan, which in some form will affect all people in the District. It therefore triggers this particular significance criteria.
Consistency with existing Council plans and documents.	1	The use of the Community Benefit Assessment Tool is consistent with existing Council plans and documents.
Potential for the promotion of Community Plans.	1	The use of the Community Benefit Assessment Tool provides for the consideration of Community Plans in assessing the priority of a project/programme.
Levels of public interest.	3	It is not anticipated that there will be a high level of public interest in the Tool itself, but there is likely to be a high level of interest in the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan work programme.
Other potential issue of significance	n/a	Not applicable

Next Actions

53. Following adoption by the Council, staff will continue to develop the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan budgets.
54. Alongside the preparation of the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan budgets, staff will assess community benefit.
55. The cumulative results of the assessment will be used to determine the priority of the projects and programmes for the 2012-2022 Ten Year Plan.
56. This work will then be presented to the Council and Community Boards in October 2011 for its consideration.

References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

Attachment A *Community Benefit Assessment Tool: Council Outcome Indicators*

Attachment B *Community Benefit Assessment Tool: How To Guide for Staff*

Attachment A

Community Benefit Assessment Tool - Attachment A - Council Decision Ma...

Attachment B

Community Benefit Assessment Tool - Attachment B - Council Decision Ma...