

# S O L G M

NZ SOCIETY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGERS



## Strategic Planning Working Party Newsletter #1 – February 2008

The Working Party met at the offices of the Wellington City Council on 22 February. The business discussed is summarized below.

### Community Outcomes Guide

The Community Outcomes guide for the “2009 and Beyond” series was originally scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2008. Work has been interrupted by the focus in late 2007 on work for the “2009 and Beyond” seminars and more recently by the commitment of team members to work relating to their councils’ annual plans. The project will be started again during March with a revised due date in early July.

The team working on this comprises:

- Mark Allen – Waitakere CC
- Rory Palmer – New Plymouth DC
- Tania Madden – Masterton DC
- Roxanne Miller – E Waikato
- Barbara MacLennan – DIA
- Kim Kelly – Hutt City
- Andrew Boyle – Palmerston North City
- Michael Hodder – Rangitikei DC; and
- Don Mackay from SOLGM.

### 2009 and Beyond

The WP reviewed the evaluations from the seminars held late last year and provided comments on draft speakers briefs for the upcoming “2009 for Decision-Makers” series. The WP requests that people make sure that their elected members are aware of the opportunity to attend these events. For further information about the seminars go to:

[http://www.solgm.org.nz/tools/events/list.aspx?SECT=Business\\_School\\_Events](http://www.solgm.org.nz/tools/events/list.aspx?SECT=Business_School_Events)

### Community Plan Conference 2008

A Steering Group is being set up to develop the conference programme. This will include some members of the WP along with some of the volunteers who have been part of the Steering Groups for previous conferences. The WP has proposed a theme for the conference along the lines of “**how to get a strategy driven LTCCP**” – as opposed to one that merely adds up the numbers provided by asset and finance managers.

Feedback from the 2007 Conference had highlighted the fact that there is increasingly a 2 tier audience for this conference. On the one hand, there are a significant number of people who are relatively new to local authority strategic planning roles, and we expect this will continue to be the

case. On the other hand, there is a growing group for whom 2009 LTCCP will be their third such exercise. The WP considered the suggestion of a separate “LTCCP master class” seminar or workshop for the more experienced practitioners. The alternative of a separate “Introduction to the LTCCP” course was also considered.

The WP was concerned that holding separate events for the two groups might result in the loss of the opportunity for networking between the “old chums” and the “new hands”, which is seen as a valuable aspect of the single broadly based event. It has asked that for 2008 the Steering Group should aim to develop a programme which includes some sessions with separate streams targeted to the two groups of people within the single programme. The WP has however also asked SOLGM to develop a proposal for an “Introduction to the LTCCP” seminar which might be offered in the future.

The WP welcomes feedback in relation to its proposed approach and suggestions for specific topics that might be included in the programme. Contact [dmackay@solgm.org.nz](mailto:dmackay@solgm.org.nz)

### **DIA Community Outcomes Workshop – 4 April**

SOLGM is convening a session on “what central government staff need to know about local authority planning processes”. This will include some case study material from selected councils as well as the usual “sermon from the mount”. For further information about the workshop: [http://www.localcentral.govt.nz/copwebsite.nsf/wpg\\_URL/Community-Outcomes-Process-News-&-Events-News-&-Events?OpenDocument](http://www.localcentral.govt.nz/copwebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Community-Outcomes-Process-News-&-Events-News-&-Events?OpenDocument)

### **Local Futures Project**

Dr Claudia Scott attended for discussion of the guidance products the project is developing and the potential for SOLGM to “adopt” the products developed by the project after its funding ceases.

The project is currently developing guides on:

- Assessing strategic performance;
- Community engagement / consultation; and
- Strategic tools.

For further information about Local futures go to: <http://www.localfutures.ac.nz/>

### **LGNZ Material on Council – Maori Engagement**

The WP reviewed the material that has been developed by LGNZ and DIA. It recommends that people make themselves familiar with this. It can be accessed at <http://www.lgnz.co.nz/projects/LGandMaori/index.html>

### **Independent Inquiry Into Rating**

The WP was briefed on the involvement to date of SOLGM and LGNZ in the Government’s processes for considering its response to the Inquiry’s recommendations.

### **“Taking a Sustainable Development Approach” and the 2009 LTCCP**

Part of the Auditor-General’s report on the 2006 LTCCPs was a report from an independent reviewer on the extent to which the LTCCPs showed evidence of local authorities “taking a sustainable development approach” (as per section 14 of the LGA2002). The Auditor-General signaled that he would also be taking some interest in this issue in the audit of the 2009 LTCCPs. There is however currently no guidance to local authorities about what reasonable expectations might be on this issue.

The WP agreed to develop a relatively brief guidance piece on this issue as a supplement to the current set of "2009 and Beyond" guides. A project team has been formed to do this. We are interested in being able to include relevant examples of things that councils either included in their 2006 LTCCPs or are planning to include in their 2009 LTCCPs that might be of use to other local authorities. All offers to [dmackay@solgm.org.nz](mailto:dmackay@solgm.org.nz)

### **Possible Strategic Planning Portal or Online Library**

The WP has asked SOLGM staff to do more work on options for how such a tool might be set up and administered. In particular they are interested in whether a Wiki style of operations might be possible.

### **Climate Change and the 2009 LTCCP**

The WP has asked that further work be done to assess the guidance currently in the market and assess whether there is a gap to be filled.

### **Strategic Management Course**

The WP endorsed the course. The informal survey carried out at the 2007 Community Conference identified that few local authority strategic planning practitioners have formal training in strategy.

The WP was pleased that it had been possible for the cost of this course to be reduced from that offered last year. The WP has asked SOLGM to consider the feasibility of this course being offered in centres other than Wellington next year. For information about the course go to: [http://www.solgm.org.nz/site/Business\\_School\\_Events/Strategic\\_Management.aspx](http://www.solgm.org.nz/site/Business_School_Events/Strategic_Management.aspx)

### **Work Programme**

The main focus of the WP over the coming period will be on:

- The Community Outcomes guide for the "2009 and Beyond" suite;
- Overseeing the development of the programme for the 2008 Community Plan conference;
- The guidance piece on a sustainable development approach and the 2009 LTCCP;
- Investigating the feasibility of an online library / portal for resources for local authority strategic planners;
- Assessing whether there is a need for guidance around climate change and the 2009 LTCCP.

### **Feedback and Offers of Assistance**

Are always welcomed. Contact [dmackay@solgm.org.nz](mailto:dmackay@solgm.org.nz)