



Masterton  
District Council

# Community Development Policy

April 2004

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

## MASTERTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **DEFINITION**

Community development is “a process of social action in which the people of the community organise themselves for planning and action; define their common and individual needs and solve their problems; execute the plans with a maximum reliance upon community resources\*; and supplement these resources when necessary with services and materials from government and non-government agencies outside of the community.” United Nations Report 1955

(as reported in “Community Development in Territorial Local Authorities”, 1993, Department of Internal Affairs)

### **Strong features of community development are:-**

- people-defined problems and issues
- people working together to find solutions
- increasing through cooperative action the self-reliance of the community and its individuals rather than increasing dependency on others
- the role of community development workers is to facilitate this process rather than organise on behalf of people in the community
- community development workers should work in ways which empower people, by sharing information, skills and other resources.
- community resources are supplemented through services and materials supplied by government and non-government agencies outside the local community.
- education, health and social welfare are core Central Government responsibilities and should be adequately funded by Central Government, with community resources having a relatively minor role in meeting locally-perceived shortfalls and needs.

\* Community resources include financial, people- and facility-related resources

# **“Community development” includes the following aspects relevant to local government activities:**

a process: a programme: a social movement: a profession: a methodology.

## **A Process**

As a process, advocacy for greater citizen participation in the affairs of local authorities may necessitate education of politicians and officers to solicit input eg consultation with youth and tangata whenua. The processes used in community development projects are often as important as the end result, because people and communities gain skills and empowerment through involvement in processes, the integrity of which is maintained through Council leadership.

## **A Programme**

Community development programmes develop as a response to community demands for a service or new venture. Council may fund these programmes or support in other ways eg peppercorn rentals. The community development aspect is in the process of helping people to identify their goals and provide support for their realisation.

## **A Social Movement**

Strong community demand may seek to change policy and/or decisions. This creates a potential dilemma for community development workers if they are employed by a local authority and must facilitate and make resources available to groups who may be in opposition to their employer.

Community development workers should be encouraged to assist client groups to use the pathways available within the Council structure to effect change.

## **A Profession**

A community worker who employs community development methodology and helps people to identify needs, clarify objectives, obtain resources; identifies groups who don't have access to resources; increases public awareness of community issues; and carries out research.

## **A Methodology**

Community development as a methodology occurs as a result of the education of politicians and council staff.

# Local Government and Community Development

The Local Government Act 2002 identifies the purpose of local government is to promote social, economic, environmental and cultural, well being of communities in the present and for the future

The Long Term Council Community Plan identifies its community outcomes as including

- Nurturing community – promoting a caring and safe community for all ages.
- Equitable Society – promoting services and policies that are accessible and applicable to all sectors of the Masterton society.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To strengthen and develop the Masterton community, encourage partnerships and celebrate diversity.

## PHILOSOPHY

This policy is developed acknowledging the Treaty of Waitangi and with the following underlying philosophy:

THAT:

- people have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them
- people have a right to a fair share of resources based on their differing needs
- Masterton District Council will work in partnership with the Maori community and other cultures
- Masterton District Council will support local initiatives, self-determination and skill development
- Masterton District Council will reflect the Community Development Policy through its annual plan by committing a minimum of 3.8% of rates (1.6% for community development grants and 2.2% for the Arts and History Centre), in addition to funding from the Hillary Commission and Creative New Zealand, to community development, arts and culture and recreation grants, affirmed annually.

## **GOAL 1. to strengthen communities through partnerships**

### OBJECTIVES

- to foster and support coordination and cooperation
- to continue the Council's role in coordination and cooperation through having working partnerships with the Masterton Safe and Healthy Community Council, the Youth Council, Maori and other ethnic groups, and groups representing people with disabilities, and to strive to increase the number of such partnerships
- to promote a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment through partnerships and fostering initiatives with relevant groups
- to consult with the Maori Community through mutually agreed channels in a spirit of partnership
- to continue to provide community development funding via grants at least at the current level of 1.6% of rates
- to support skills development for community groups through training and education
- to assess the range of community needs and priorities for community funding
- to support and promote youth development in consultation with young people

## **GOAL 2. To promote opportunities for involvement in recreation, arts and culture**

### OBJECTIVES

- to promote the value of heritage conservation, recreation, arts and culture
- to encourage the provision of active and passive recreation facilities and opportunities for people of all abilities and ages
- to endorse community consultation in the distribution of SPARC and Creative NZ funding
- to support partnerships in heritage conservation, recreation, arts and cultural pursuits consistent with the recreation strategy and the arts and culture policy

## **GOAL 3. To promote equitable services and systems**

### OBJECTIVES

- by advocating for the community so as to attract pilot schemes and funding (for example through the Violence Free Campaign)
- by providing leadership and assistance in the provision of equitable and accessible services and systems
- by assisting community groups in advocating for their own needs
- by endeavouring to remove barriers to participation

## **GOAL 4. To be actively involved in national and international initiatives including Safer Communities, Healthy Communities, Sister Cities.**

## **GOAL 5. To be involved in monitoring national policy development and advocate where appropriate.**

## **GOAL 6. To aim for continuous improvement in Council's community services and to be responsive to changing needs and accepted practices**

### OBJECTIVES

- to make transparent the Council's priorities for community development grants through a publicised budget and statement of the types of initiatives that will be supported.
- Publish the list of grant recipients in the Annual Report noting the projects contributed to.
- Focus on 'outcome' rather than 'output'.

**GOAL 7. To identify, adapt or develop social performance indicators to measure and monitor changes to community wellbeing.**