

Part 10

Auckland Community Boards

Report for the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance

An analysis of data about Auckland community boards collected for the Local Government New Zealand project on roles and functions of community boards. The original report “The Role and Functions of Community Boards” was published in June 2008 (available at http://www.lgnz.co.nz/library/files/store_020/Rolesandfunctionsofcommunityboards.pdf)

Mary Richardson

JHI Consultancy Ltd

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Executive Summary

1 This report is based on a project commissioned by Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) on behalf of the New Zealand Community Boards' Executive Committee to examine the roles and functions of community boards.¹

2 The objective of this report is to analyse and highlight data about Auckland community boards obtained for the LGNZ project, to

- identify the functions carried out by Auckland community boards
- identify Auckland community board satisfaction with the working relationships with their councils
- compare selected aspects of Auckland community boards with each other, community boards in other cities, and the New Zealand-wide data.

3 The report is not intended to be a fully self-contained or stand-alone document.

4 There are 144 community boards now operating in both urban and rural areas within local authorities throughout New Zealand. Five of the seven Auckland councils had community boards – a total of 30 community boards.

5 All the city councils in Auckland had community boards. These community boards provided 100% coverage of the councils' districts. One of the three district councils had community boards.

Findings from Council Survey

6 There was a wide variation in the decision-making functions delegated. There was also wide variation in the advisory roles delegated.

7 Auckland councils were slightly more likely to delegate advisory and decision-making roles than councils nationally:

- advisory – 48% of cases in Auckland compared with 45% nationally
- decision making – in 11% of cases in Auckland community boards had a decision-making role compared with 7% nationally.

8 This slightly higher level of delegations was reported by other cities. However, as the LGNZ report identifies, there did not appear to be a pattern where city councils had *significantly* more delegated functions than district councils. Similarly, councils where community boards covered the whole district did not appear more likely to delegate functions.

¹ Available at http://www.lgnz.co.nz/library/files/store_020/Rolesandfunctionsofcommunityboards.pdf

9 Auckland councils were also more likely to have some activities that councils attended to alone (i.e. without any advisory or decision-making input for community boards): 51% of cases in Auckland compared with 46% of cases nationally.

10 The occurrence of higher levels of delegations (advisory and decision making) and higher levels of council-only activities was because of the councils reporting joint roles within a functional area.

11 Auckland councils were more likely than councils nationally to report joint roles within a function (14% cases overall for Auckland compared with 6% nationally). This may be owing to the fact that four of the five Auckland councils that have community boards are city councils (and are therefore more likely to be large enough to split metropolitan and community functions). However, this did not necessarily hold for other cities in the LGNZ survey.

Findings from Community Board Feedback

12 The feedback from Auckland community boards suggested that there is room for improvement in the working relationships between councils and their community boards.

13 Feedback from Auckland community board members suggest that community boards

- are not always involved and informed early in decision-making processes
- are rarely involved in planning and managing consultation processes
- are not always given adequate information of what was proposed and adequate time to respond
- do not believe that their councils give due consideration to their views
- do not believe they have sufficient delegated powers and funding to enable them to feel as if they could have an impact.

14 Some Auckland respondents suggested that community boards had no greater advisory roles than any group or citizen in the community; for example, they provided advice as part of a formal submission to council along with other submitters.

15 Some also suggested that it was often at the discretion of council officers, council committees, or council whether community board advice was sought on a particular matter. A few reported that the relationship between councils and community boards was influenced by the attitude and behaviour of council officers. These findings were consistent with findings in the study nationally.

Community Engagement and Consultation

16 Community boards are in an ideal position to reflect the views of their communities in the decision-making process. It would be reasonable to expect that community boards would have a major role in advising on and leading consultation processes.

17 There is a significant body of literature (nationally and overseas) that identifies barriers to participation. Community boards are well placed to alleviate some of the barriers to participation identified by the Department of Internal Affairs and in other research.

18 Research also identifies that the ability of communities to contribute to policy outcomes depends on there being a certain critical mass of social capital. Community boards are possibly better placed than councils to strengthen local “bridging social capital” and to facilitate “linking social capital”.

19 However, the surveys, interviews, and workshop discussion suggested that community boards were not extensively involved in community engagement processes. It appears that in some instances community engagement had become “professionalised” (i.e. planned and managed by council staff or consultants with little, if any, community board involvement).

Community Outcomes

20 Few community boards were actively involved in developing the community outcome process or facilitating community input into the outcome identification.

Relationship between Community Boards and Councils

21 Previous studies and guidelines have suggested a number of good practice elements (see LGNZ report).

22 Review of the Auckland data suggests that there is room for improvement in the working relationships between councils and their community boards.

23 Despite some relationship issues most Auckland community boards were able to provide examples of significant achievements. Auckland community boards were also enthusiastic about the role they could play given improved delegations and relationships.

Background

24 Community boards came into being in 1989 as a result of local government reforms. Each community board represents the interests of a particular community. Communities may be established in any part of the district where no other community already exists. These communities are geographically based with defined boundaries that coincide with statistical mesh block areas.

25 Section 52 of the Local Government Act 2002 sets out the role of the community board, which is to

- represent and act as an advocate for the interests of the community
- consider and report on any matter referred to it by the territorial authority and any issues of interest to the community board
- make an annual submission to the territorial authority for expenditure within the community
- maintain an overview of services provided by the territorial authority within the community
- communicate with community organisations and special interest groups in the community
- undertake any other responsibilities delegated by the territorial authority.

26 In addition to the functions specified in section 52, the Local Government Act 2002 gave local authorities wide powers to delegate matters to community boards. It also places a legal requirement on councils to consider what responsibilities should be delegated to boards. The Act states that a council “must consider whether or not to delegate to a community board if the delegation would enable the community board to best achieve its role” (Schedule 7, clause 32(7)).

27 In 1991 and 1995 the Department of Internal Affairs surveyed councils to establish the functions undertaken by community boards. In 2007, the New Zealand Community Boards’ Executive Committee of Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) believed that it was timely to undertake a follow-up study. The objectives of the follow-up study were to

- identify the functions carried out by community boards
- describe community board satisfaction with the working relationships between councils and community boards
- identify if and how the functions of community boards have changed over time (compared with findings of the 1991 and 1995 studies).

28 The study spanned two council terms (the end of the 2003–2007 and early 2007–2010). This enabled the project to examine if there were any changes in the functions or relationships after the 2007 elections.

29 The findings from that study were published in 2008 in an LGNZ report titled “The Role and Functions of Community Boards” (Richardson, 2008). That report provides information regarding

- the functions carried out by community boards in New Zealand
- how the functions of community boards have changed over time (compared with findings of the 1991 and 1995 studies)
- community board satisfaction with the working relationships between councils and community boards
- good practice guidelines for formulating positive working relationships between a territorial authority and community board.

30 It also provides a brief summary of the historical development of community boards and their current powers and legal status.

31 It is suggested that that report is read in conjunction with this paper.

Research Methodology

32 The New Zealand Community Boards’ Executive Committee of LGNZ commissioned JHI Consultancy Ltd to examine the roles and functions of community boards.

33 The project involved qualitative and quantitative data gathering, including

- survey of community boards (143)²
- survey of district and city councils with community boards (46)
- analysis of key documents, for example councils’ local governance statements
- interviews (semi-structured) with key informants and representatives of councils and community boards.

34 The LGNZ report provided details of the methods used and the response rates.

35 The current project extracted and examined the Auckland data from the national data gathered for the LGNZ project.

36 All five Auckland councils that had community boards responded to the survey of councils. It should be noted that references in this report to “Auckland councils” refer to the five councils with community boards (Auckland City, Franklin District, Manukau City, North Shore City, Waitakere City) rather than the seven local councils (with the addition of Papakura District and Rodney District) that make up the region’s territorial authorities.

37 Only 33% of the community boards had responded to the community board survey. This response provides a snapshot of some community boards’ views. However, the

² At the time the survey was conducted 143 community boards existed. Subsequently a new community board has been formed in Rotorua.

findings cannot be extrapolated to draw conclusions about community boards in Auckland overall.

38 The original research also included interviews with some community board members and staff and discussion with Auckland region community board members at the Auckland Region Community Board Workshop in November 2007.

39 This project re-examined the findings from the interviews and the notes from the workshop (including workshop notes and file notes from discussion with Auckland community board members).

Key Findings from the Council Survey

Number of Community Boards

40 Forty-six of 73 councils in New Zealand had community boards:

- 9 of the 16 city councils
- 37 of the 57 district councils.

41 Five of the seven Auckland councils had community boards (a total of 30 community boards), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Auckland community boards

Auckland council	No. of boards	Community boards
Auckland City Council	10	Avondale
		Eastern Bays
		Eden-Albert
		Great Barrier
		Hobson
		Maungakiekie
		Mt Roskill
		Tamaki
		Waiheke
		Western Bays
Manukau City Council	8	Clevedon
		Botany

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Table 1 continued

Auckland council	No. of boards	Community boards
		Howick
		Mangere
		Manurewa
		Otara
		Pakuranga
		Papatoetoe
North Shore City Council	6	Albany
		Birkenhead-Northcote
		Devonport
		East Coast Bays
		Glenfield
		Takapuna
Waitakere City Council	4	Henderson
		Massey
		New Lynn
		Waitakere
Franklin District Council	2	Onewhero-Tuakau
		Waiuku-Awhitu

Coverage by Community Boards

42 Councils were asked to identify whether community boards covered the whole of the council's district.³ Figure 1 provides a summary of council responses nationally regarding community board coverage in each district.

43 Nationally, 13 councils reported that their community boards gave full coverage of the district (28% of the districts with community boards).

44 Four of the five Auckland councils reported 100% coverage:

- Auckland City

³ Most councils used geographical coverage of the district by community boards to estimate the coverage by community boards. However, some councils referred to the proportion of the population represented by community boards.

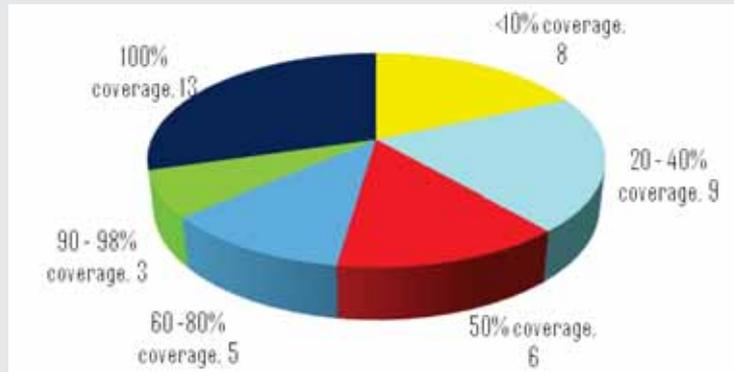


Figure 1 Percentage of district coverage by all New Zealand community boards

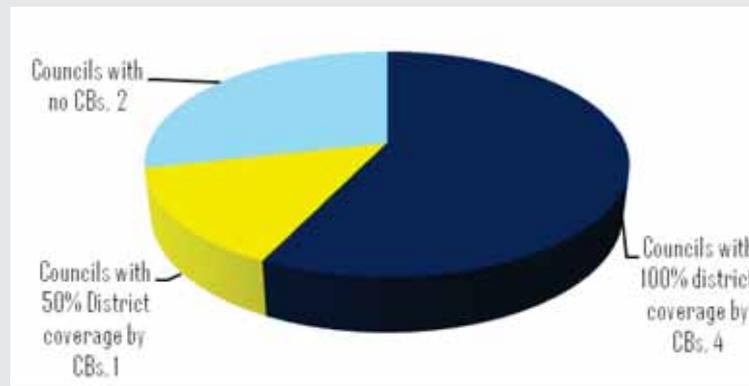


Figure 2 Community board coverage (Auckland)

- Manukau City
- North Shore City
- Waitakere City.

45 Franklin District reported 50% coverage of the district. Rodney and Papakura Districts had no community boards (see Figure 2).

Functions of Community Boards

46 Nationally

- in 45% of cases, community boards had advisory roles
- in 7% of cases, community boards had a decision-making role
- in 46% of cases, only the council attended to the function
- in 8% of cases, neither the council nor community board were involved.

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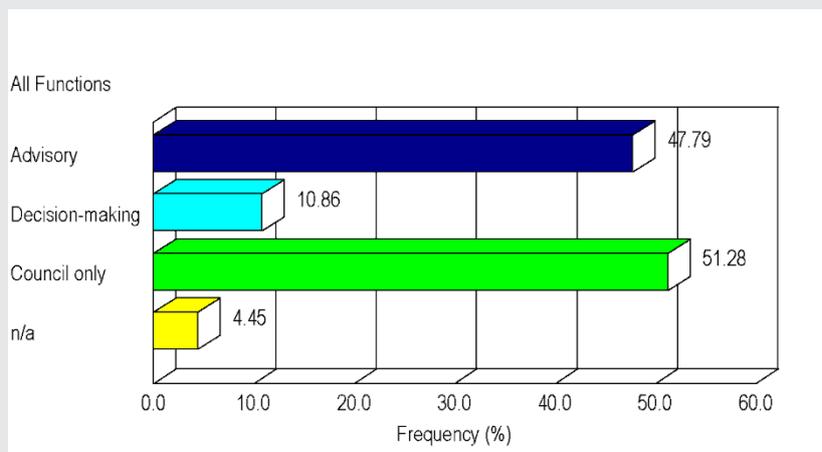


Figure 3 Auckland community board functions

Note: total may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

47 In Auckland overall

- in 48% of cases, community boards had advisory roles
- in 11% of cases, community boards had a decision-making role
- in 51% of cases, only the council attended to the function
- in 4% of cases, neither the council nor community board were involved (Figure 3).

48 There were a number of cases where Auckland councils reported their community boards had joint roles (14% of cases overall).

49 Some councils identified that some responsibilities for a functional area were delegated while other responsibilities were retained by council. For example, some councils had metropolitan grants distributed by council and also community grants distributed by community boards. For Auckland this occurred in 23 of the 46 functional areas.

50 There was a variation in the level of advisory and decision-making roles delegated to community boards by Auckland councils (Figure 4).

51 As noted in the LGNZ report, comments made by both councils and community boards suggest that there was wide variation in the nature of the advisory powers and processes. In some cases it appears that there were formal requirements that advice was sought from community boards prior to decisions being made. In others it appears that councils or officers had discretion about whether community boards' advice was sought.

52 Similarly, it appears that in some cases there was discretion about the processes used to seek advice from community boards, for example, whether this was done through a formal process at community board meetings (i.e. at report to the community board); by seeking verbal or email comment directly from board chairs or members; or by inviting

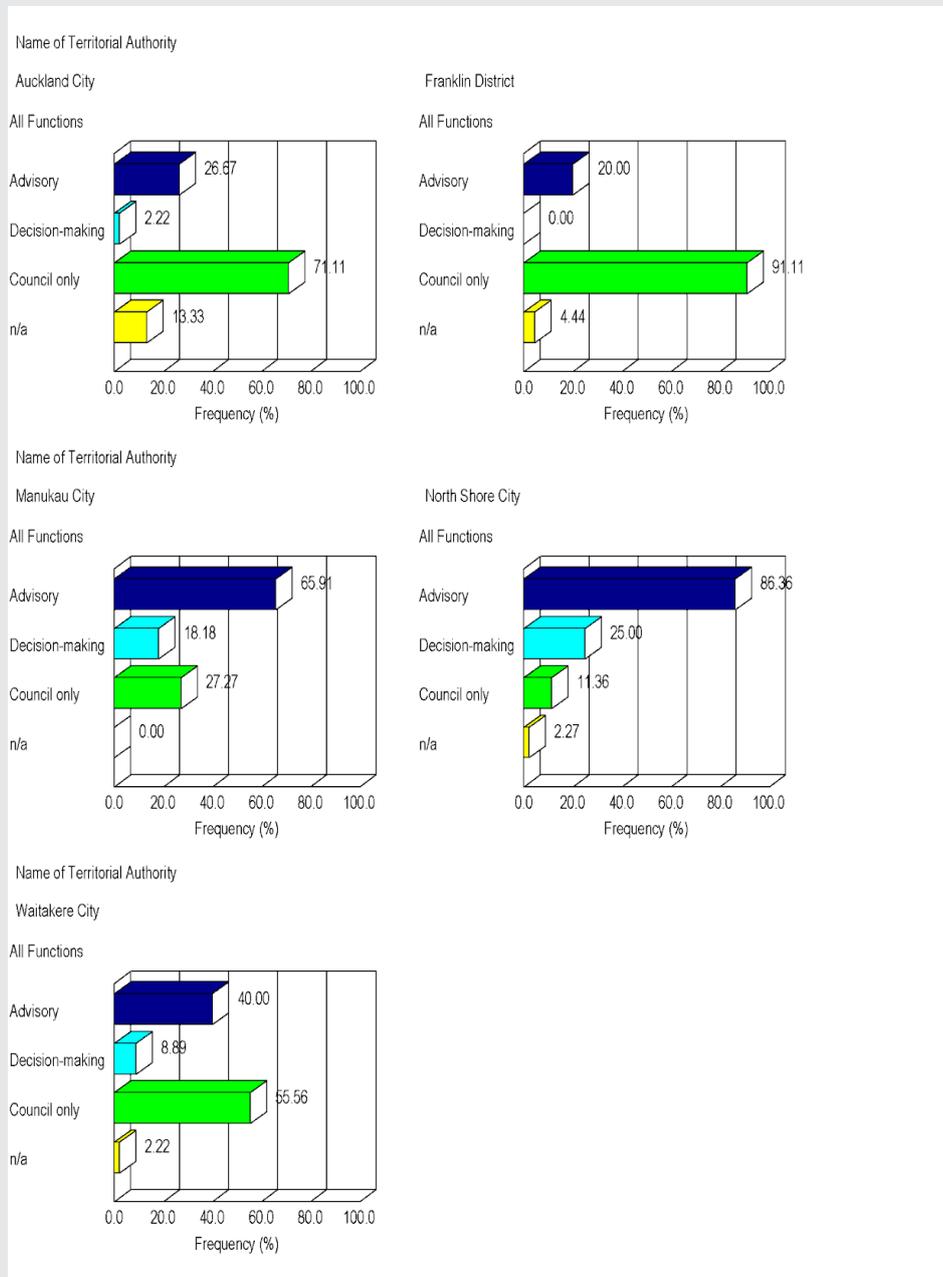


Figure 4 Delegations across all functions – comparison between Auckland councils

Note: totals may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

community board representatives to join working parties, standing committees, or advisory groups.

53 Table 2 summarises the information provided by the five Auckland councils regarding the functions carried out by the community boards within their districts.

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Table 2 Auckland councils' delegation of roles to community boards, by functional area

Functions ¹	Number of councils delegating ²				Notes
	Advisory role	Decision making	Council only	N/A	
Development of governance statements	3		2		
Preparation of LTCCP	5		1		Franklin, joint advisory & council only
Preparation of annual plan/report	4	1	1		North Shore, joint advisory & decision making
Development of community outcomes	4		2		Franklin, joint advisory & council only
Community consultation	5	1			North Shore & Waitakere, joint advisory & decision making
Policy/bylaw development	4		1		
Building controls			5		
Dog registration and hydatids control	1	1	3		
Health inspection	2		3		
Noise control	2		3		
Liquor licensing	3		3		Auckland, advisory & council only
Gambling consents	2		3		
Traffic control	2	3	2		North Shore, joint advisory & decision-making Auckland, advisory & council only
Civil defence	2		4		Auckland, advisory & council only
Fire prevention	2		3		Auckland, advisory & council only
Preparation of district plan	4		2		
Designation (district plan)	3		2		
Enforcement of district plan	3		3		Franklin, advisory & council only
Control of subdivisions	2		4		Franklin, advisory & council only
Control of activities on rivers and lakes	1		3		
Natural hazards protection	2		3		
Hazardous substances protection	1		4		
Heritage orders	3		2		
Harbour works	2			3	
Road works	4	2	2		Franklin, Manukau, & North Shore, advisory & decision making
Land drainage	2		3		
Refuse collection	3		3		Franklin, advisory & council only
Sewage and storm water drainage	2	1	3		North Shore, advisory & decision making
Trade waste	1		4		

Functions ¹	Number of councils delegating ²				Notes
	Advisory role	Decision making	Council only	N/A	
Water supply	2		3		
Water race			3	1	
Vehicle testing			2	3	
Parks, reserves, camping gardens, gardens	3	3	2		Manukau & North Shore, advisory & decision making Franklin, advisory & council only
Cemeteries	2		4		Franklin advisory & council only
Sports and recreation activities	3	2	2		Manukau & North Shore, advisory & decision making
Sporting facilities	3	1	2		Manukau, advisory & decision making
Community centres and halls	5	1	2		North Shore, advisory & decision making
Community grants	2	4	1		Auckland & North Shore, advisory & decision making
Tourism, information centre	2		2	1	
Libraries	3		3		
Housing/accommodation	2	1	2	1	North Shore, advisory & decision making
Employment promotion			5		
Economic development	2	1	3		Franklin, advisory & decision making
Provision of public information	3	1	2		North Shore, advisory & decision making

Notes: ¹Functions are based on those identified in the 1991 and 1995 surveys by the Department of Internal Affairs. ²Each delegation of a particular function by a single council is recorded for both advisory and decision-making roles by the community board; hence, the total number may exceed five (the number of Auckland councils with community boards). LTCCP, long-term council community plan.

54 The following sections examine these functions in more detail. Functions have been grouped into four functional areas:

- planning and policy
- regulatory
- resource management
- services.

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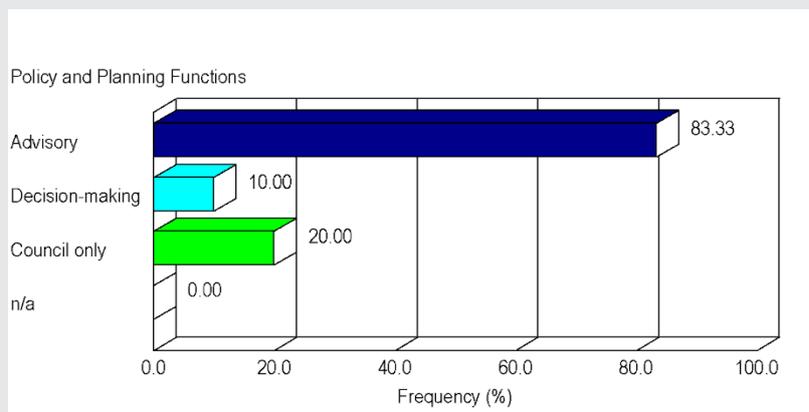


Figure 5 Auckland community boards' involvement in planning and policy

Note: total may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

Table 3 Policy and planning delegations – number of delegations by Auckland councils, by functional area

	Development of governance statements	Preparation of LTCCP	Development of community outcomes	Policy/bylaw development	Community consultation	Preparation of annual plan/report
Advisory	3	5	5	4	4	4
Decision making					2	1
Council only	2	1	1	1		1

LTCCP, long-term council community plan.

Planning and Policy

55 Overall Auckland community boards tended to have a large advisory role (70.5%) and relatively small decision-making role (5%) in the planning and policy area (Figure 5).

56 Within this group of functions there were some areas where community boards had a greater role than others. For example, councils were more likely to delegate some decision-making roles in the area of community consultation and the preparation of the annual plan (Table 3).

Comparison between Councils

57 The level of delegation to community boards for policy and planning functions varied between Auckland councils (Figure 6).

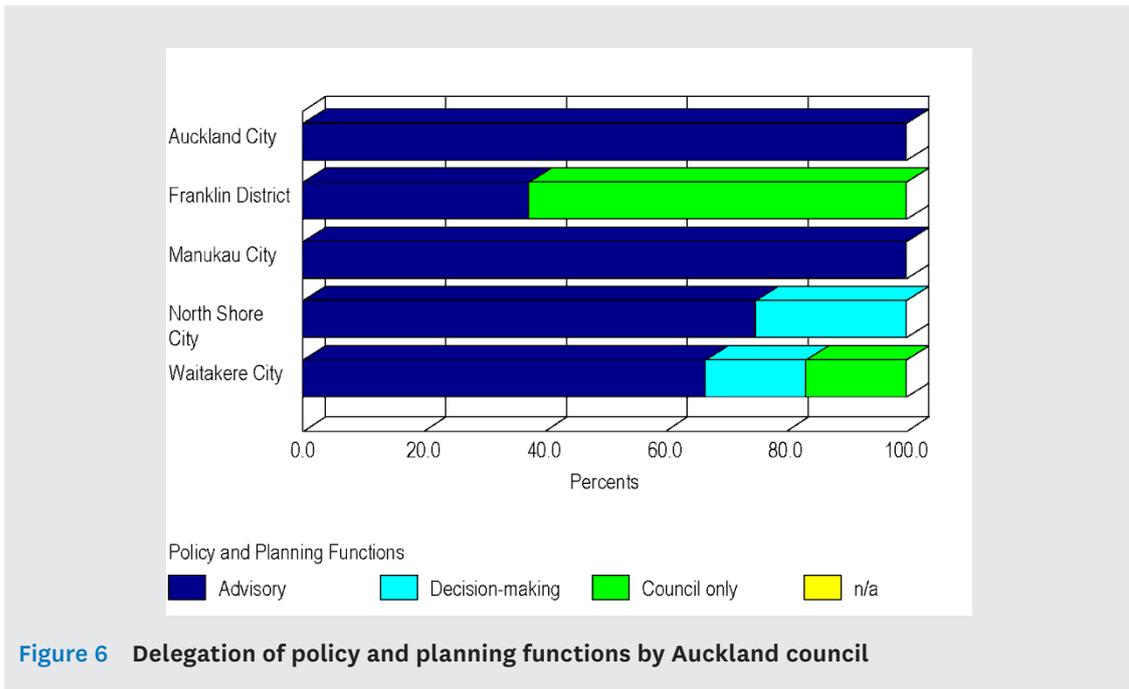


Figure 6 Delegation of policy and planning functions by Auckland council

Table 4 Policy and planning delegations (Auckland councils)

	Auckland City	Franklin District	Manukau City	North Shore City	Waitakere City
Development of governance statements	Advisory	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Council only
Preparation of LTCCP	Advisory	Advisory & council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Preparation of annual plan/report	Advisory	Council only	Advisory	Advisory & decision making	Advisory & decision making
Development of community outcomes	Advisory	Advisory & council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Community consultation	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory & decision making	Advisory & decision making
Policy/bylaw development	Advisory	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory

LTCCP, long-term council community plan.

58 Table 4 summarises the information provided by the five Auckland councils regarding the roles carried out by the community boards within the policy and planning area.

59 As discussed in the LGNZ report, the findings from the community board survey and the interviews suggest that the nature of the advisory role varied. In some cases it

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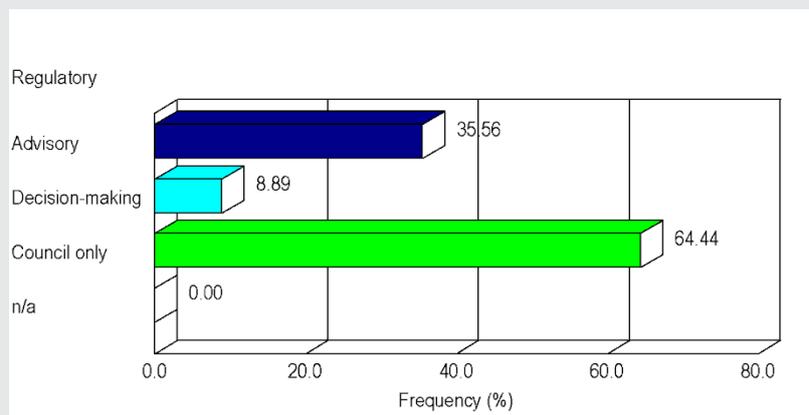


Figure 7 Auckland community boards' involvement in regulatory functions

Note: total may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

appears that whether community board advice was sought or not was at the discretion of council or council staff.

Regulatory Functions

60 Nationally, the group of regulatory functions were largely performed by councils only (71%). Where roles were delegated to community boards these were largely formal or informal advisory roles (27%) rather than decision-making roles (3%).

61 Auckland councils reported a similar pattern. However, Auckland councils appeared to be more likely to delegate advisory roles (36%) and decision-making roles (8%) (Figure 7).

62 Regulatory functions include

- building controls
- dog registration and hydatids control
- health inspection
- noise control
- liquor licensing
- gambling consents
- traffic control
- civil defence
- fire prevention.

Table 5 Regulatory functions – number of delegations by Auckland councils, by functional area

	Building controls	Dog registration & control	Health inspection	Noise control	Liquor licensing	Gambling consents	Traffic control	Civil defence	Fire prevention
Advisory		1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
Decision making		1					3		
Council only	5	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3

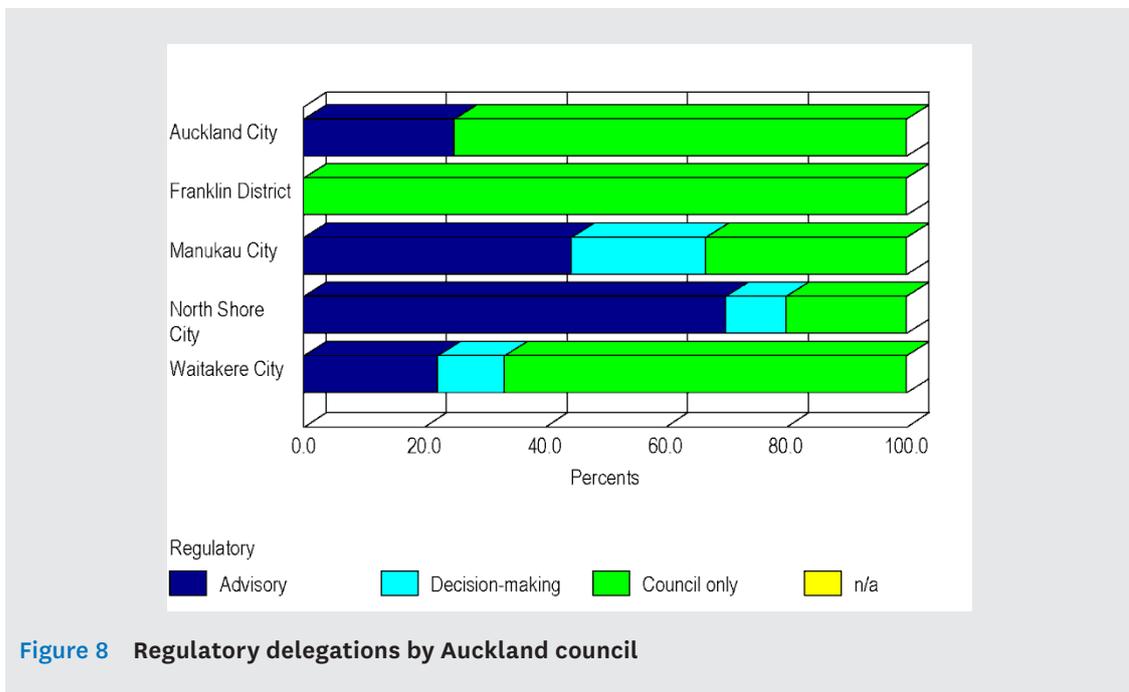


Figure 8 Regulatory delegations by Auckland council

63 Delegations varied across these functions. Traffic control was the area where councils were more likely to have delegated advisory and decision-making functions (Table 5).

Comparison between Councils

64 The level of delegation to community boards for regulatory functions varied between Auckland councils (Figure 8).

65 Table 6 summarises the information provided by the five Auckland councils regarding the roles carried out by the community boards within the regulatory area.

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Table 6 Regulatory delegations (Auckland councils)

	Auckland City	Franklin District	Manukau City	North Shore City	Waitakere City
Building controls	Council only	Council only	Council only	Council only	Council only
Dog registration & hydatids control	Council only	Council only	Decision making	Advisory	Council only
Health inspection	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Noise control	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Liquor licensing	Advisory & council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Gambling consents	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Traffic control	Advisory & council only	Council only	Decision making	Advisory & decision making	Decision making
Civil defence	Advisory & council only	Council only	Council only	Council only	Advisory
Fire prevention	Council only	Council only	Council only		Advisory

Resource Management Functions

66 Nationally the group of resource management functions were largely performed by councils only (62%). Where roles were delegated to community boards these were largely formal or informal advisory roles (33%) rather than decision-making roles (1%).

67 Auckland councils reported a similar pattern. However, Auckland councils appeared to be more likely to delegate advisory roles (48%) (Figure 9).

68 Nationally, only two councils identified that their community boards have decision-making roles in resource management functions. No council delegated decision-making resource management roles.

69 Resource management functions included

- preparation of district plan
- decisions on designation (district plan)
- enforcement of district plan
- control of subdivisions
- control of activities on rivers and lakes
- natural hazards protection
- hazardous substances protection
- heritage orders.

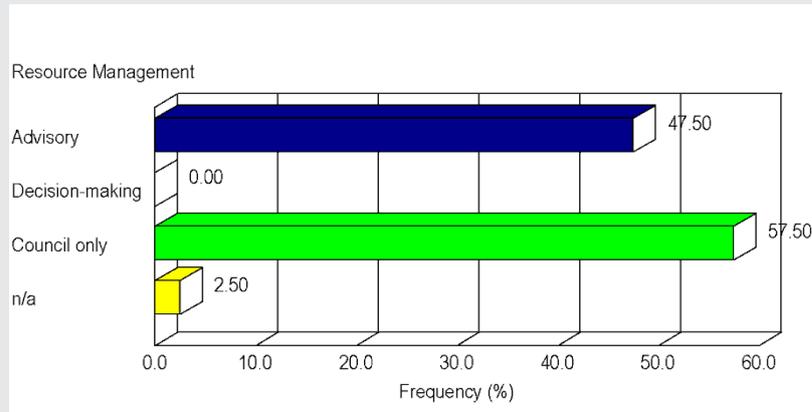


Figure 9 Auckland community boards' involvement in resource management functions

Note: total may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

Table 7 Resource management functions – number of delegations by Auckland councils, by functional area

	Preparation of district plan	Designation (district plan)	Enforcement of district plan	Control of subdivisions	Control of activities on rivers and lakes	Natural hazards protection	Hazardous substances protection	Heritage orders
Advisory	4	3	3	2	1	2	1	3
Decision making								
Council only	2	2	3	4	3	3	4	2

70 Community boards were more likely to have a role in areas related to the preparation of the district plan (Table 7).

Comparison between Councils

71 There was a marked variation between Auckland councils in delegation of resource management advisory functions (Figure 10, Table 8).

Service Functions

72 Service functions were where community boards appear to have had the largest delegated decision-making and advisory roles both nationally and in Auckland.

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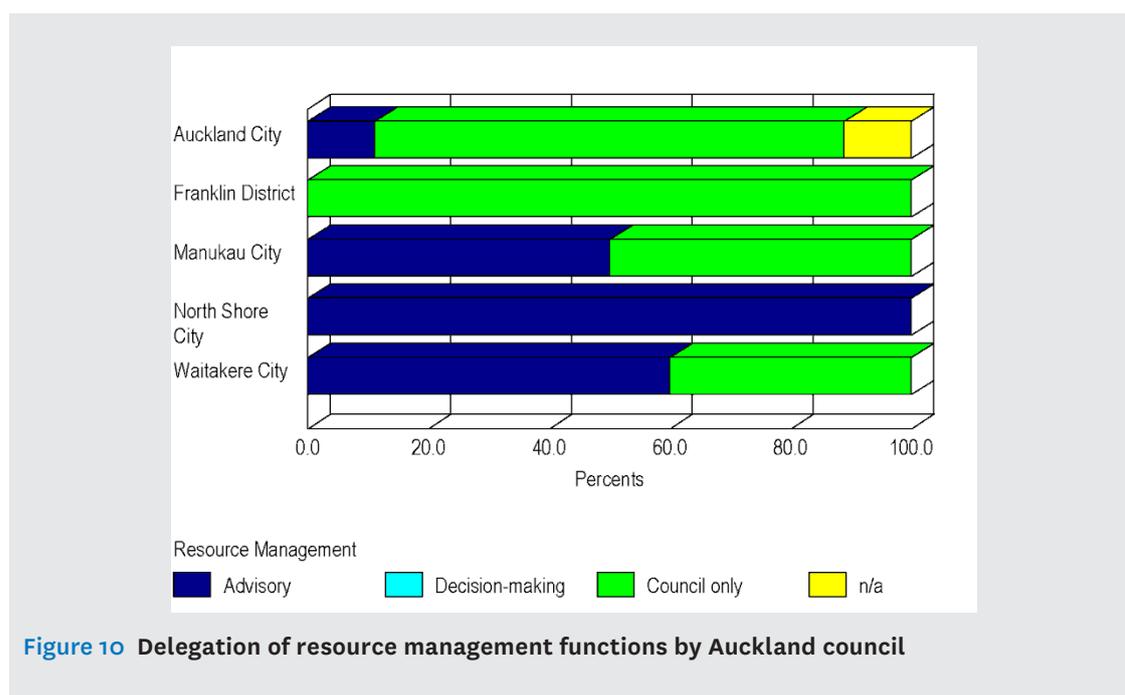


Figure 10 Delegation of resource management functions by Auckland council

Table 8 Resource management delegations (Auckland councils)

	Auckland City	Franklin District	Manukau City	North Shore City	Waitakere City
Preparation of district plan	Advisory & Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Designation (district plan)	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Enforcement of district plan	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory & Council only
Control of subdivisions	Council only	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory & Council only
Control of activities on rivers and lakes	n/a	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Council only
Natural hazards protection	Council only	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory
Hazardous substances protection	Council only	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Council only
Heritage orders	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory

73 Nationally

- in 50% of cases, community boards had an advisory role
- in 12% of cases, community boards had a decision-making role
- in 34% of cases, community boards had no role (i.e. council-only function).

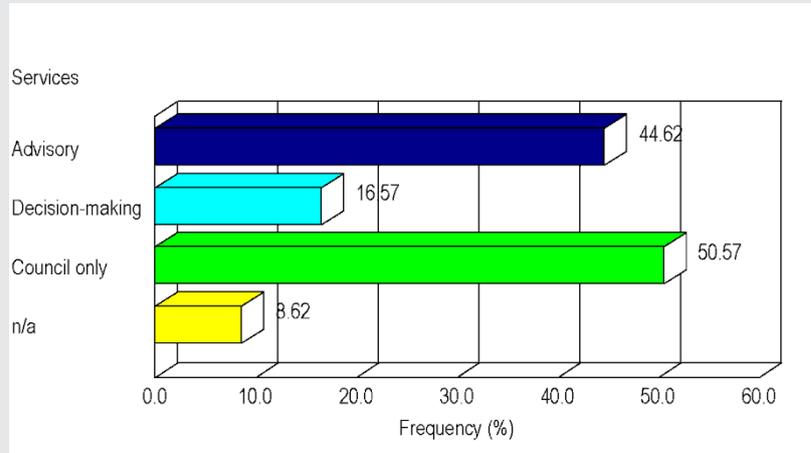


Figure 11 Auckland community boards' involvement in service delivery functions

Note: total may not add to 100 percent because of multiple responses.

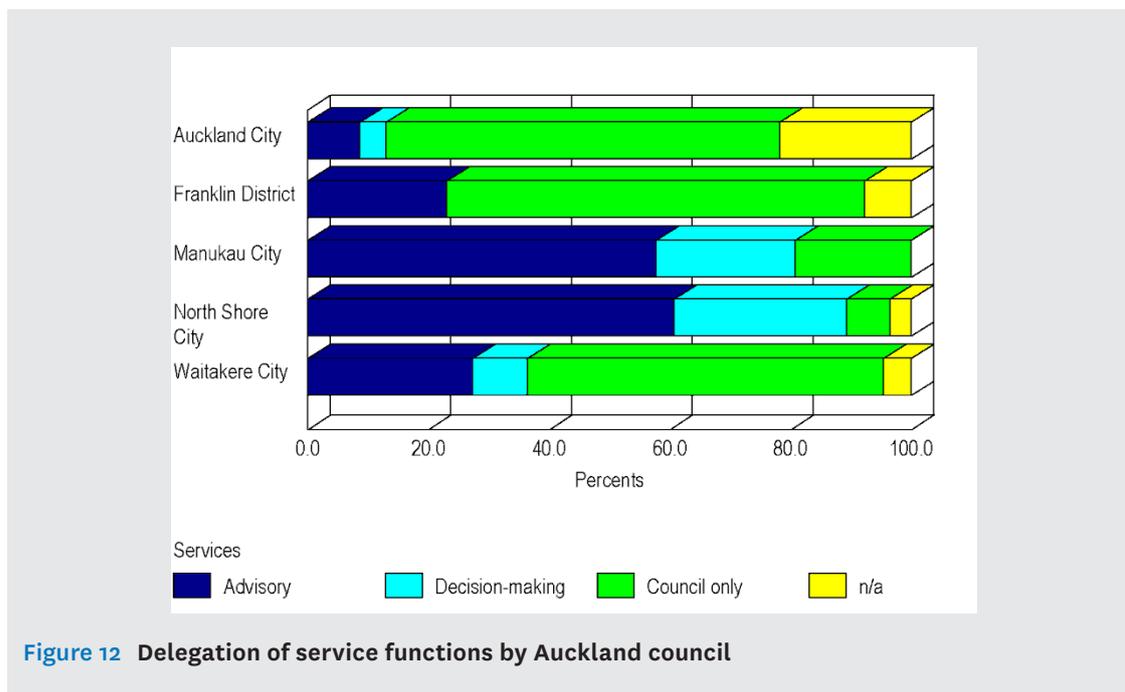
Table 9 Services – number of delegations by Auckland councils, by functional area

	Harbour works	Road works	Land drainage	Refuse collection	Sewage and storm water	Trade waste	Water supply	Water race	Vehicle testing	Cemeteries	Sports & recreation activities	Sporting facilities	Community centres and halls	Community grants	Tourism, information centre	Libraries	Housing/accommodation	Employment promotion	Economic development	Provision of public information
Advisory	2	4	2	3	2	1	2			2	3	3	5	2	2	3	2		2	3
Decision making		2			1						2	1	1	4			1		1	1
Council only		2	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	4	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	5	3	2
n/a	3							1	3						1		1			

74 Overall Auckland community boards were more likely to have decision-making roles (Figure 11).

75 There was a wide variation in the delegation of decision-making functions and advisory powers across the functions included in the service cluster (Table 9).

Part 10. Auckland Community Boards



Comparison between Councils

76 There was a wide variation among councils in the number of decision-making functions delegated. There was also wide variation in the advisory powers delegated.

77 Nationally 67% of councils identified that their community boards had a decision-making role in one or more service area. In Auckland four of the five councils (80%) identified that their community boards had a decision-making role in one or more service area (Figure 12).

78 As shown in Table 10, Auckland councils were more likely to delegate decision-making roles in functions such as

- community grants
- community centres
- parks and reserves
- sports and recreation activities
- road works.

Community Grants

79 Nationally

- Twenty-five councils (60%) identified that their community boards had decision-making roles concerning certain community grants.

Table 10 Service function delegations (Auckland councils)

	Auckland City	Franklin District	Manukau City	North Shore City	Waitakere City
Harbour works	n/a	n/a	Advisory	Advisory	n/a
Road works	Council only	Advisory & council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory & decision making	Advisory
Land drainage	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Refuse collection	Council only	Advisory & council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Sewage and storm water drainage	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory & decision making	Council only
Trade waste	Council only	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Council only
Water supply	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only
Water race	n/a	Council only	Council only		Council only
Vehicle testing	n/a	n/a	Council only	n/a	Council only
Parks, reserves, camping gardens, gardens	Council only	Advisory & council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory & decision making	Decision-making
Cemeteries	Council only	Advisory & council only	Advisory	Council only	Council only
Sports and recreation activities	Council only	Council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory & decision making	Advisory
Sporting facilities	Council only	Council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory	Advisory
Community centres and halls	Advisory & council only	Advisory & council only	Advisory	Advisory & decision making	Advisory
Community grants	Advisory & decision making	Council only	Decision making	Advisory & decision making	Decision making
Tourism, information centre	n/a	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Council only

Table 10 continued

	Auckland City	Franklin District	Manukau City	North Shore City	Waitakere City
Libraries	Council only	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory & council only
Housing/accommodation	n/a	Council only	Council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory
Employment promotion	Council only	Council only	Council only	Council only	Council only
Economic development	Council only	Council only	Advisory & decision making	Advisory	Council only
Provision of information	Council only	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Council only

- Eleven councils (26%) identified that their community boards had an advisory role in the distribution of community grants.
- Some councils reported that they had a mix of council and community board grants. In these cases community boards had decision-making power over the distribution of community board grants and an advisory or no role in the distribution of council grants.

80 In Auckland

- Auckland City and North Shore City reported their community boards had advisory and decision-making roles.
- Manukau City and Waitakere City reported their community boards had advisory roles.
- Franklin District reported that this was a function performed by council only (Figure 13).

Community Centres and Halls

81 Nationally, 10 councils (24%) identified that their community boards had decision-making powers concerning certain community centres and halls. Thirty-two councils (76%) identified that their community boards had an advisory role in decisions concerning community centres and halls.

82 In Auckland

- Auckland City and Franklin District reported their community boards had some advisory roles but some decisions were council only.
- Manukau City and Waitakere City reported their community boards had advisory roles.

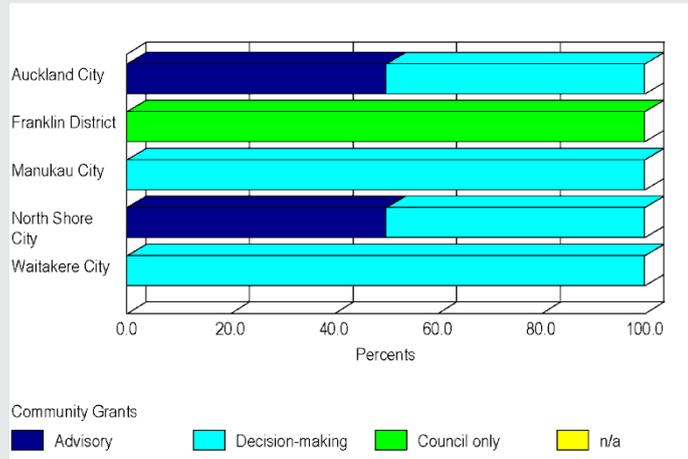


Figure 13 Delegation of community grants by Auckland council

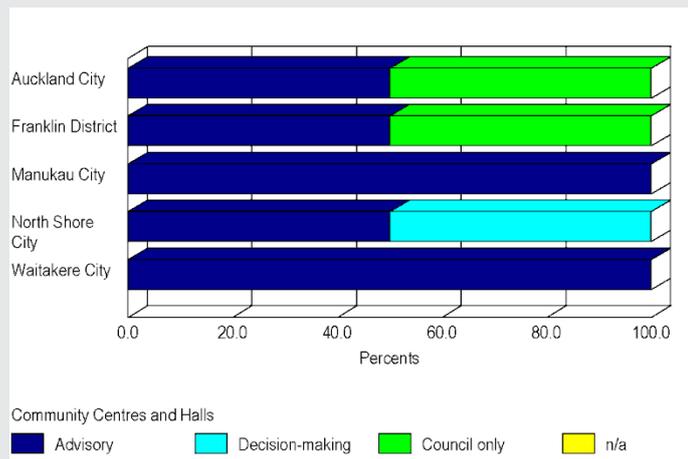


Figure 14 Delegation of community centres and halls functions by Auckland council

- North Shore City reported that its community boards had advisory and decision-making roles (Figure 14).

Parks, Reserves, and Gardens

83 Nationally 11 councils (26%) identified that their community boards had decision-making powers concerning certain parks, reserves and gardens. Thirty-three councils (77%) identified that their community boards had an advisory role in decisions concerning parks, reserves, and gardens.

84 In Auckland

- Auckland City reported that this was a council-only function.

Part 10. Auckland Community Boards

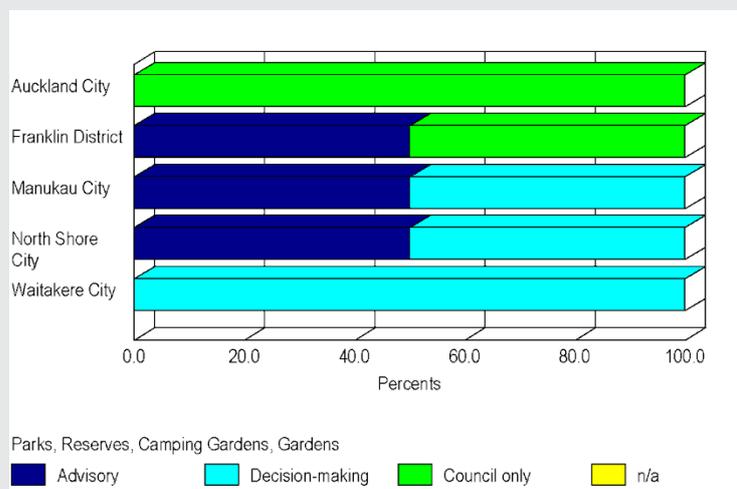


Figure 15 Delegation of parks, reserves, and gardens functions by Auckland council

- Franklin District reported its community boards had some advisory roles but some decisions were council only.
- Manukau City and North Shore City reported that their community boards had advisory and decision-making roles.
- Waitakere City reported that its community boards had a decision-making role (Figure 15).

Road Works

85 Nationally six councils (14%) identified that their community boards had decision-making powers concerning road works. Thirty-three councils (77%) identified that their community boards had an advisory role in decisions concerning road works.

86 In Auckland

- Auckland City reported that this was a council-only function.
- Franklin District reported its community boards had some advisory roles but some decisions were council only.
- Manukau City and North Shore City reported that their community boards had advisory and decision-making roles.
- Waitakere City reported that its community boards had an advisory role (Figure 16).

Summary of Findings from Council Survey

87 This survey found that among councils there was a wide variation in the decision-making functions delegated. There was also wide variation in the advisory roles delegated.

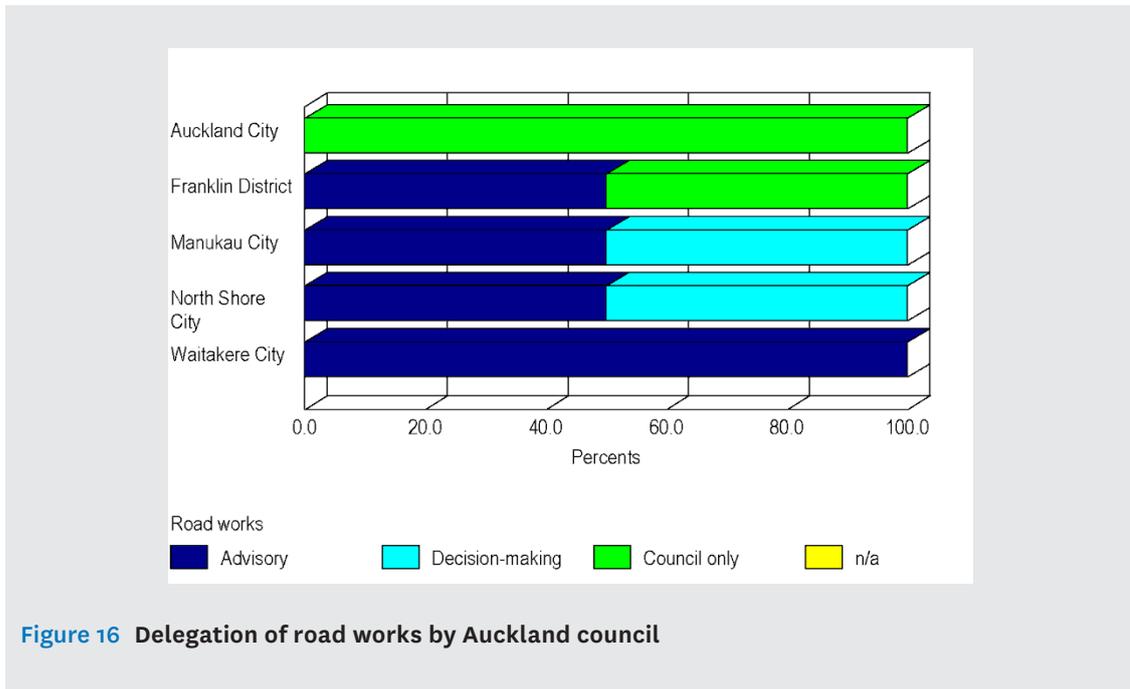


Figure 16 Delegation of road works by Auckland council

88 Auckland councils were slightly more likely to delegate advisory and decision-making roles than councils nationally. Community boards had

- an advisory role in 48% of cases in Auckland compared with 48% nationally
- a decision-making role in 11% of cases in Auckland compared with 7% nationally.

89 This slightly higher level of delegations was reported by other cities. However, as the LGNZ report identifies, there did not appear to be a pattern where city councils had significantly more delegated functions than district councils. Similarly, councils where community boards covered the whole district did not appear more likely to delegate functions.

90 Auckland councils were also more likely to have some activities that councils attended to alone (i.e. without any advisory or decision-making input for community boards): 51% of cases in Auckland compared with 46% of cases nationally.

91 The occurrence of higher levels of delegations (advisory and decision making) and higher levels of council-only activities was because of the councils reporting joint roles within a functional area.

92 Auckland councils were more likely than councils nationally to report joint roles within a function (14% cases overall for Auckland compared with 6% nationally). This may be owing to the fact that four of the five councils are city councils (and are therefore more likely to be large enough to split metropolitan and community functions). However, this did not necessarily hold for other cities in the LGNZ survey.

93 A number of councils nationally and in Auckland reported that their community boards had an advisory role across a number of functions. However, comments and interview responses discussed in the next section suggest that these ranged from formal

advisory roles to ad hoc roles. It also appears that it was often at the discretion of council officers, council committees, or council meetings as to whether community board advice was sought on a particular matter.

Findings from Community Board Feedback

94 This section discusses the findings from the survey of community boards and the interviews and discussions with Auckland community board members.

95 The survey questionnaire identified a number of key arrangements and processes, and asked community boards to rate their satisfaction with the associated arrangements and relationships. There were four satisfaction ratings: very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied. Community boards were also asked to identify their key achievements over the triennial.

96 The response rate (33%) to this survey means that findings cannot be inferred to represent community boards in Auckland.⁴

97 The survey was followed up with interviews and discussions with Auckland community board members at the Auckland Region Community Board Workshop in November 2007.

Key Achievements

98 Community boards were asked to identify some of their key achievements during 2004–2007. Auckland respondents identified a range of achievements, for example

- upgrades or redevelopment of local business areas, including business improvement districts, main street projects, and streetscape projects
- upgrades of local facilities, including a number of community halls, a local library, a community centre, an indoor skating and sports facility, a town hall
- roading and traffic improvements, including road widening, traffic flow and traffic safety initiatives, tarseal of rural roads, improving carparks, extending parking as part of a “park and ride” initiative, construction of a bridge across a local stream, and extension of walkways
- upgrading and retention of heritage features and public art, for example a war memorial hall
- supporting community groups and initiatives

4 The survey had only a 34% response rate nationally. The survey was followed up with a number of interviews with community board members, councillors, and council staff.

- Implementing community programmes and events, for example a New Zealand Soapbox Derby
- organising events, for example Anzac Day ceremonies
- community safety initiatives, including winning a New Zealand Community Board Best Practice Safety Award.

99 Some boards reported that their major achievements had included improving their own processes, for example

- improving teamwork
- increasing and improving consultation with the community
- increasing community awareness of the community board
- cooperating with other boards in the district and across the Auckland region.

100 Several boards identified major achievements associated with their relationship with council or other governance matters. For example, community boards identified the following:

- retaining the ward system through the representation review (including opposing a council proposal to abolish its community boards)
- gaining pay parity across four boards
- gaining delegated authority for certain activities, for example the naming of heritage names in parks and reserves
- forging much closer relationship with councillors
- rates remission and/or postponement, for example for farming blocks or covenanted land
- gaining greater respect from council officers.

Community Board Satisfaction Rating

101 The questionnaire identified a number of key arrangements and processes, including the following:

- representation arrangements
- delegation of functions to the community board
- allocation of discretionary funding to the community board
- allocation of grant funding to the community board to distribute
- level of administrative support to the community board

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- information provision by council to the community board
- information provision by council units/staff to the community board
- interaction between community boards in the district
- consultation processes involving the community.

102 Community boards were asked to rate whether they were very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with a range of arrangements and relationships.

103 The questionnaire also identified a number of key council planning and decision-making processes and asked community boards to rate their satisfaction with these opportunities to participate in these decisions.

104 Nationally overall

- 65% of survey respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the arrangements and relationships.
- 35% signalled that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

105 Of the Auckland survey respondents

- 54% of respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the arrangements and relationships.
- 47% signalled that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (Figure 17).

106 The following graph (Figure 18) compares the levels of satisfaction between the different areas/processes reported by Auckland community board survey respondents.

107 It is important to read these findings with a great deal of caution. As discussed earlier, the response rate was low (33%). Also it is important to note that 70% of the Auckland response came from community boards from two councils.

108 However, the survey findings were consistent with the findings from the interviews and discussions with Auckland community board members.

109 The areas of particular concern to Auckland community board members (in survey and discussions) appeared to be

- delegations of functions and funding
- community consultation
- development of community outcomes
- input into decision making.

Delegations of Functions and Funding

110 Some Auckland respondents (survey and verbal responses) reported that their delegations had been progressively weakened. This perception is consistent with the findings of the survey of territorial authorities, which suggested that there had been a

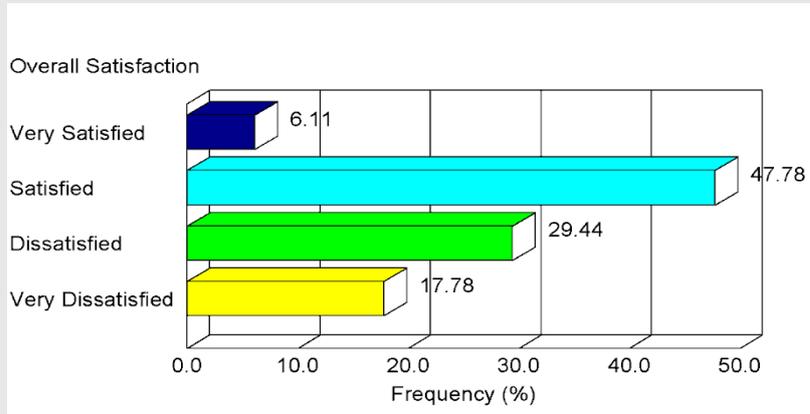


Figure 17 Overall level of satisfaction with current arrangements (Auckland community boards)

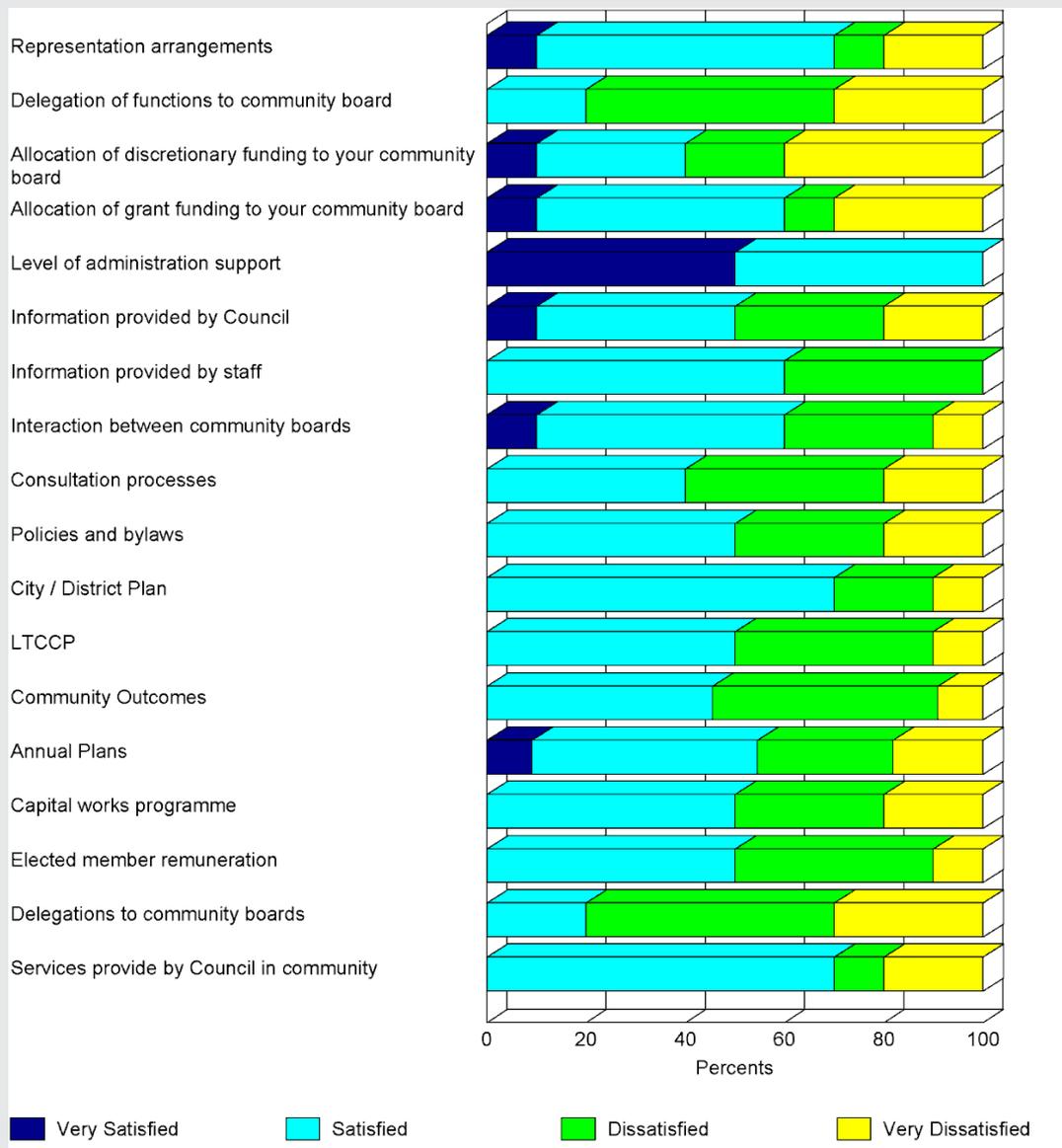


Figure 18 Level of community board satisfaction (Auckland)

Part 10. Auckland Community Boards

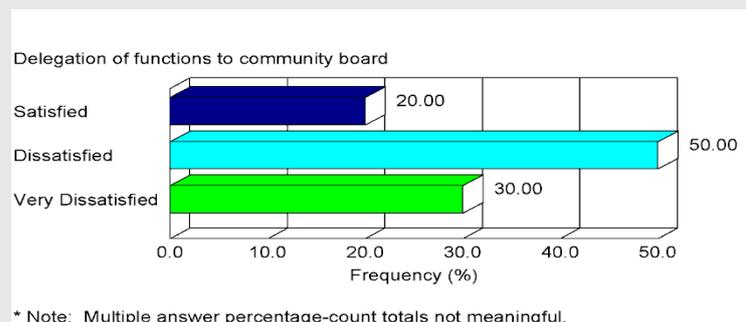


Figure 19 Community board satisfaction with delegations (Auckland)

reduction in the roles delegated to community boards between the mid-1990s and 2007 (refer LGNZ report).

111 The survey responses noted a high level of dissatisfaction among Auckland respondents regarding delegations (Figure 19).

112 Auckland community boards stated (both in written and verbal responses) that they had minimal delegations. This view was held by community board members from both city and district councils and from urban- and rural-based boards.

113 A number of Auckland survey respondents identified that it was important to have a budget to carry out any delegated functions. These respondents noted the lack of funding they received. Verbal responses also identified the need for discretionary funding.

Input into Decision Making

114 Auckland community board members raised a number of concerns regarding the lack of input community boards had into council decision making. There appeared to be a high level of dissatisfaction with current arrangements.

115 The survey of councils identified that Auckland community boards had a significant advisory role (48% of cases overall). However, the survey and discussions with community boards suggested that a number of community board members were concerned about their ability to influence decision making.

116 Some Auckland respondents suggested the community boards had no greater advisory role than any group or citizen in the community; for example, they provided advice as part of a formal submission to council along with other submitters. Examples of respondents' comments were

Decisions on policies – district plans, LTCCPs, annual plans – are all set by the Council, and the CB members can make submission in exactly the same way as the general public. There is no consultation at all.

and

We have no speaking rights at any committees of Council

117 Some Auckland community boards reported that they were informed of decisions rather than being given the opportunity to have input into options and decisions. Examples of respondents' comments were

We are largely presented with decisions of officers or councillors as opposed to being involved at the development stage.

and

The LTCCP and other plans are essentially fixed prior to Board involvement

118 A number of Auckland respondents commented on the lack of information provided by councils. Some suggested that community boards' ability to advocate for their community was constrained by the information provided by the council. Comments included

Information too late to challenge, debate or consult or decisions already made.

and

Information is slow incomplete, frequently based on erroneous assumptions

119 Some Auckland respondents reported that they had poor relationship with some councillors and suggested that these councillors ignored or blocked community board input:

Openly hostile relationship from some councillors

120 However, others noted that the councillor on their community boards played an essential role of ensuring community boards had input into decision making:

Sometimes we are left out altogether and find out about things only because our councillor is very alert and spots them.

121 Some Auckland respondents (survey and verbal) reported that the information they received, and their opportunity to have input into decision making, depended on the attitude of the officers involved (rather than formal delegations or processes). Auckland respondents reported that some officers referred items directly to council committees instead of to the community boards. For example

Some officers referring items directly to Council committees instead of community boards first.

122 There were suggestions that officers can act as "gate-keeper" between the community boards and councils and between community boards and their communities. Several Auckland respondents raised concerns about the attitude of some officers towards community boards:

Employees unwilling to discuss project options or explain reason for recommendations

123 Discussions at the Auckland Region Community Board Workshop suggest that community board members believed they had to constantly question officers to ensure they received full information.

Part 10. Auckland Community Boards

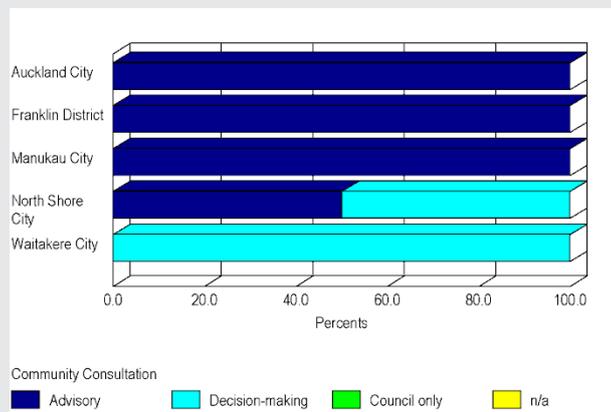


Figure 20 Community board community consultation delegations (Auckland councils)

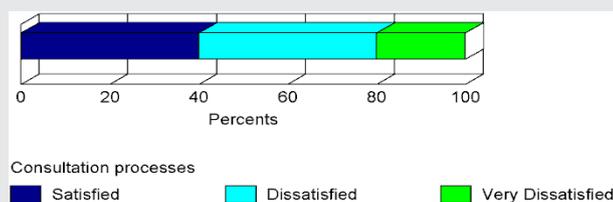
Community Views and Consultation

124 The council survey reported high levels of community board involvement in consultation processes in Auckland (Figure 20).

125 Auckland community board respondents (survey and verbal) were concerned about council consultation processes. Generally the concerns focused on the lack of community board involvement in the consultation processes.

126 The community board survey indicated that amongst Auckland respondents

- 40% were dissatisfied
- 20% were very dissatisfied
- 40% were satisfied (see diagram below).



127 This was a higher level of dissatisfaction than nationally.

128 Community board perceptions regarding their involvement in consultation was not consistent with the reported council delegations. Two councils reported that community boards had decision-making roles. Community board members from these councils did not have greater levels of satisfaction (and in some cases reported lower levels).

129 Auckland community board responses (survey and verbal) suggest that the level of community board involvement in consultation was not as high as the council survey findings indicated. Community board respondents reported that the community board

role was confined to consultation about community board matters rather than council matters. Some respondents reported that some consultation had occurred without the board's knowledge.

130 Auckland respondents suggested that the community boards should have been more involved in community consultation processes. They believed that community boards should be involved in planning and implementing consultation.

131 Some Auckland respondents suggested that consultations were managed by officers or consultants and that the findings were reported to the community board.

Community Outcomes

132 The survey asked community boards to indicate whether they were satisfied with their opportunities to participate in decisions regarding the community outcomes. Community board involvement in community outcomes was also a focus on the interviews and discussions.

133 Nationally, 64% of survey respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied. Only 50% of Auckland respondents reported that they were satisfied (no Auckland respondent reported they were very satisfied).

134 The interviews and discussions sought to identify the nature of community board involvement in community outcome processes. Findings suggested that nationally community boards tended to play a minor role in the community outcomes processes. Most community boards were informed of the draft outcomes and invited to make comment.

135 Auckland community boards reported that they had not played an active role in planning or managing the community outcomes processes (despite reports suggesting community boards had hosted consultation meetings in Waitakere and North Shore). Respondents' comments included

We were presented with the outcomes from council

136 Many Auckland community board members suggested that community boards should be more involved in the community outcomes processes. A few suggested that community outcomes should flow up from the community board level.

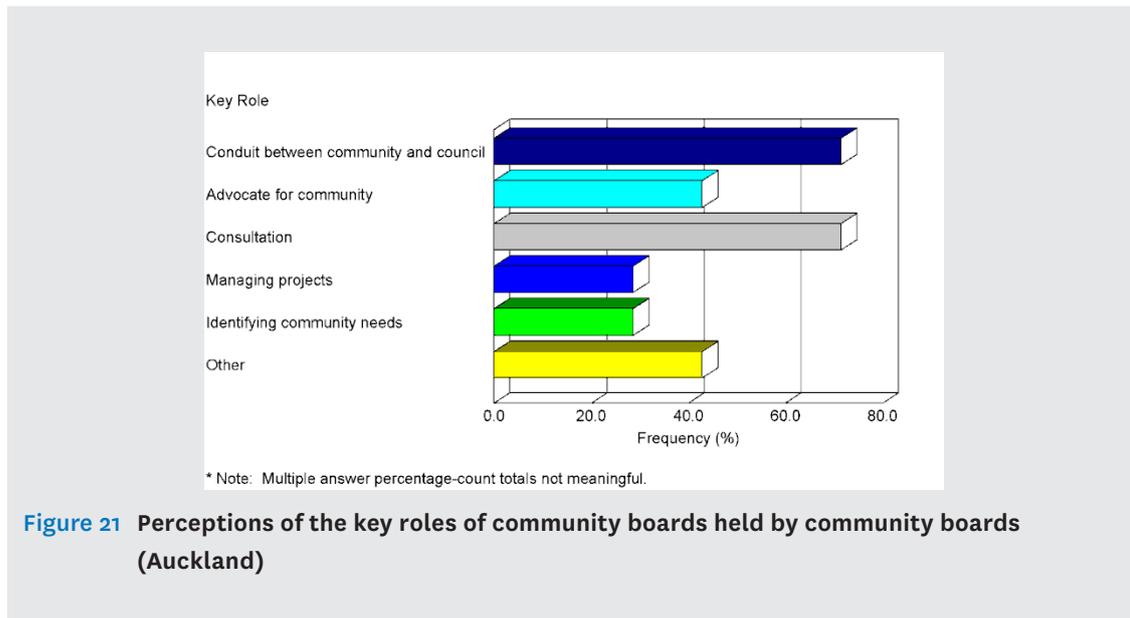
Perceived Role of Community Boards

137 The survey asked community boards to identify what they believed should be the key roles and functions of community boards in the future.

138 Auckland respondents identified

- acting as a conduit between council and the community
- advocating for the interests of the community

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- facilitating consultation
- considering and reporting on community issues and needs
- managing community projects and services (Figure 21).

139 These were slightly different from the roles identified nationally, where the identified roles tended to be more directly aligned to those specified in the Local Government Act 2002 and guidance material.

Summary of Findings from Community Board Feedback

140 The feedback from Auckland community boards suggested that there is room for improvement in the working relationships between councils and their community boards.

141 A number of Auckland community board members voiced concerns about their relationship.

142 The LGNZ report suggested that factors that appear to have contributed to good relationships include

- community boards being involved and informed early in decision-making processes
- community boards being involved in planning and managing processes rather than simply being consulted on proposals
- community boards being given adequate information of what was proposed and adequate time to respond
- community boards having time and opportunities to seek the views of their communities so they were able to represent and reflect these views

- councils giving due consideration to the views expressed by community boards
- recognition that district-wide or metropolitan issues affect community boards and were of interest to them
- multiple channels and methods to involve and seek advice from community boards (i.e. reports to boards; co-opting board representatives on to working parties, advisory boards, ad hoc committees, and standing committees; invitations to attend and/or speak at council meetings; regular meetings between boards and council, etc.)
- sufficient delegated powers and funding to community boards to enable them to feel as if they could have an impact.

143 Feedback from Auckland community board members suggest that community boards

- are not always involved and informed early in decision-making processes
- are rarely involved in planning and managing consultation processes
- are not always given adequate information of what was proposed and adequate time to respond
- do not believe that their councils give due consideration to their views
- do not believe they have sufficient delegated powers and funding to enable them to feel as if they could have an impact.

144 Some Auckland respondents suggested that community boards had no greater advisory roles than any group or citizen in the community (for example, they provided advice as part of a formal submission to council along with other submitters).

145 Some also suggested that it was often at the discretion of council officers, council committees, or council whether community board advice was sought on a particular matter. A few reported that the relationship between councils and community boards was influenced by the attitude and behaviour of council officers. These findings were consistent with findings in the study nationally.

146 Despite some relationship issues most Auckland community boards were able to provide examples of significant achievements.

147 Auckland community boards were enthusiastic about the role they potentially could play given improved delegations and relationships.

Discussion

Community Engagement and Consultation

148 Local authorities have long had statutory responsibilities to consult and involve the public in relation to certain issues, such as land use planning. The Local Government Act 2002 reasserted the relationship between local government and their communities and the need to involve citizens in decision making and implementation.

149 Community boards are in an ideal position to reflect the views of their communities in the decision-making process. It would be reasonable to expect that community boards would have a major role in advising on and leading consultation processes. However, the surveys, interviews, and workshop discussion suggested that community boards were not extensively involved in community engagement processes. It appeared that in some instances community engagement had become “professionalised” (i.e. planned and managed by council staff or consultants with little, if any, elected member involvement).

150 Recent research by the Department of Internal Affairs suggests that major barriers to citizen participation include

- size and complexity of local government in different geographic areas
- a sense of isolation and powerlessness
- lack of knowledge and sense of community (UMR, 2006, 2007).

151 That research identified that there was a general preference for face-to-face or telephone contact to enable a more personal connection to be made. It also found a preference for contact to be more localised, for example, targeting information to a particular neighbourhood.

152 There is a significant body of literature (nationally and overseas) that identifies similar barriers to participation (Audit Commission, 1999; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005). Some literature suggests that because participation initiatives can reinforce existing patterns of disadvantage, different participation methods are necessary to reach different citizen groups (Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker, 2001; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003); as, indeed, are different “consultation techniques” (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002, 2003).

153 Community boards are well placed to alleviate some of the barriers to participation identified by the Department of Internal Affairs and in other research.

154 Research also identifies that the ability of communities to contribute to policy outcomes depends on there being a certain critical mass of social capital (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003). Social capital has been linked to democratic performance for several decades (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti, 1993; Putnam, 2000).

155 The building of basic (bonding and bridging) social capital⁵ must therefore in itself be a major focus of local government. Research suggests that low-profile but continuous types of interaction are the “soil in which vertical involvement capacity grows” (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003). Community boards are possibly better placed than councils to strengthen local bridging social capital and to facilitate linking social capital.

Community Outcomes

156 The Local Government Act 2002 also requires all councils to facilitate a process, at least once every six years, to identify community outcomes. Community outcomes are intended to

- provide opportunities for communities to discuss their desired outcomes
- promote the better coordination and application of community resources through informing the priorities in relation to the activities of the local authority and other organisations.

157 Few community boards were actively involved in developing the community outcome process or facilitating community input into the outcome identification.

158 Many Auckland community board members suggested that community boards should be more involved in the community outcomes processes. A few suggested that community outcomes should flow up from the community board level.

Relationship between Community Boards and Councils

159 Previous studies and guidelines have suggested a number of good practice elements, including

- clear expectations, including specific delegations, on a community board’s role and responsibilities
- clear mechanisms and protocols governing council/board information exchange
- active community involvement in local matters.

160 They also suggested that community boards should have

- meaningful delegations
- adequate financial resourcing
- dedicated support
- effective communication mechanisms.

5 *Bonding* social capital – characterised by strong bonds, e.g. among family members or among members of an ethnic group; *bridging* social capital – characterised by weaker, less dense, but more cross-cutting ties, e.g. with business associates, acquaintances, friends from different ethnic groups, friends of friends, etc; and *linking* social capital – characterised by connections between those with differing levels of power or social status, e.g. links between the political elite and the general public or between individuals from different social classes (Woolcock, 1999, 2001).

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161 The LGNZ research identified that these remain as good practice elements. That research also highlighted the importance of good consultation and communication processes (as listed in paragraph 142).

162 Review of the Auckland data suggests that there is room for improvement in the working relationships between councils and their community boards.

163 Despite some relationship issues (discussed in paragraphs 125 and 126), most Auckland community boards were able to provide examples of significant achievements. Auckland community boards were also enthusiastic about the role they could play given improved delegations and relationships.

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