



MAKING EDUCATION WORK FOR MANUKAU

## **“THINK OF THE POSSIBILITIES”**

### **A Submission to Manukau City Council on the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)**

**May, 2009**

## Summary

This submission covers the following:

- **The role of an education-focused CCO.** COMET recommends that specific reference be made in the LTCCP to the importance of providing structures for addressing education and social issues that affect the future well-being of the people of Manukau.
- **Towards 2060: Principles for growth.** COMET recommends that integrated planning for social services be included as a principle for growth.
- **Major Projects: City Centre Development and Revitalisation.** COMET recommends that an education services hub be specifically identified in the LTCCP for the city centre redevelopment and revitalisation plan; and included in the Towards 2060 Strategic Spatial Plan.
- **One Plan for the Auckland region: Growth through Skills.** COMET applauds the inclusion in the One Plan of a programme of work for Growth through Skills.
- **Strategy and Policy Programme 2009-2019.** COMET supports the inclusion of the Education Strategy as part of the Towards 2060 Policy Programme umbrella.

# THE ROLE OF A CCO FOR EDUCATION

Page 111, Volume I

The LTCCP describes the role of COMET and the Key Performance Measures and Targets. We would like to note two things about the statement contained here:

1. This Statement is based on the Statement of Intent, which refers to a dated contract that is scheduled for renewal by end of June, 2009. The negotiation process is likely to result in agreed changes to the contract, and the performance measures and targets; and COMET will seek to align these with the recommendations<sup>1</sup> in our 2008 report to Manukau City Council on an education strategy (*Working Together: Mahi Tahī Tatou*).
2. The recommendations of the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance made significant statements about the importance of Social Issues, and proposed a Social Issues Board, supported by a Social Issues Advisory Group (SIAG). COMET's operations already reflect the purpose of the SIAG, and provide a model for the future. Specific reference to the importance of social issues in Manukau's LTCCP will have enduring relevance into the new governance structure for Auckland.

The following section expands on these two points.

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<sup>1</sup> The recommendations were that the central theme of the strategy should be "Working Together". See Appendix One for Summary Table.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMET AND THE MANUKAU CITY COUNCIL

The Local Government Act 2002 classified COMET as a Council Controlled Organisation. The Act places obligations on COMET to

- Prepare a Statement of Intent;
- Have that Statement of Intent “approved” by Council;
- Comply with public sector auditing standards;
- Prepare an annual Statement of Performance.

These accountability requirements are stronger than those required for most charitable trusts. The Draft Statement of Intent will be amended once the contract between the Council and COMET is agreed. The timeframe for this is June 2009.

COMET’s governing document is a Trust Deed. The settlor for the Trust is the Mayor of Manukau City, who appoints the trustees. Trustees do not receive payment for their services. As well as setting out the objects of the Trust, the Trust Deed specifies the area of benefit (Manukau). There is wide scope for trustees to act to achieve the objects of the Trust. The Trust is properly registered as a charitable trust with the Charities Commission. Registration provides the Trust with income tax exemption. COMET is registered for GST.

We are confident that the CCO structure, applied to education issues, creates a positive precedent for the management of the relationship between local government and central government in a significant social portfolio affecting local communities. We stand by our track record for delivering high value for low cost, as outlined in our Annual Reports and other documents.

## WHAT DOES COMET DO?

COMET’s role is

- To *research* needs and to provide advice, consultancy, or *advocate* for services for education in Manukau;

- To *lead* innovative approaches to addressing system gaps;
- To *co-ordinate* partnerships;
- To *facilitate* actions that meet desired outcomes.

COMET's core role is **leadership and advocacy** around current education issues facing Manukau. A significant element in this work is around "policy analysis" – that is, identifying what the (local) problem is, gathering information, consulting with others to test ideas and preparing discussion papers and so on - to support Council and community understanding of issues related to education. COMET's "Think Tank" analysis offers an independent perspective rather than a "Council Position". The analysis can be triggered by Council priorities or by trustee or community priorities. COMET works with Council officers to deliver on the vision for *Tomorrow's Manukau: Manukau Apopo*, a key outcome for which is "Educated and Knowledgeable People". In 2008 COMET presented a report to Manukau City Council on the development of an Education Strategy for Manukau. It identified a key theme - *Working Together: Mahi Tahi Tatou* – that signals the importance of collaborative approaches in addressing education issues that impact on the social well-being of Manukau. The report suggested a number of Action Opportunities that respond to the education issues that have been identified through a lengthy consultation process.

COMET is actively engaged in 'lead activities' that are supported by the above analysis, including projects and programmes. Five examples illustrate these lead activities. (1) In 2005 we researched the ICT capacities of early childhood centres, and subsequently developed a project to address gaps, now called the Pasifika SmartCentres project. (2) From 2004-2008 we led the development of youth transitions programmes in Manukau City, and later passed this project on to a provider who tendered for the service through the Ministry of Social Development. (3) As the result of a summit co-hosted by COMET and Workbase Aotearoa, COMET developed the Manukau Family Literacy Programme and created subsequent collaborations around the literacy needs of families. COMET's work in the area of family literacy has achieved international attention. (4) A stocktake of early childhood issues in Manukau in August 2007 resulted in the development of a *Tomorrow's Manukau* strategic priority project, 'Increasing Participation in Early Childhood Education'. A Summit in 2008 was instrumental in obtaining a commitment from central government to action. (5) As part of a portfolio of programmes that support relationships between business and schools, COMET hosts the Principal For A Day event, and manages a collaborative contract through New Zealand Trade and Enterprise on curriculum connections between schools and business / community.

## MODELLING SOCIAL ISSUES APPROACHES FOR THE NEW AUCKLAND COUNCIL

The Royal Commission for Auckland Governance makes the point that to be a “world-class city” Auckland has to have improved social well-being outcomes – and that these have to be better understood than they currently are. “[F]ailing to target communities with the greatest needs will perpetuate and indeed may exacerbate these inequalities, with negative consequences for the whole community”.

The report also notes that local government capacity to partner with central government in order to contribute to improved social well-being is not being used to full potential. The Royal Commission suggests that local government involvement in social wellbeing issues shouldn't mean an increase in expenditure. Since there is currently central government expenditure of \$11-12 billion in the Auckland region, “it is unlikely that the challenge of reversing poor outcomes lies with resource shortages, but rather with ensuring that current resources are applied where the greatest needs lie, and where the greatest gains can be achieved.”

*“Expenditure of this proportion emphasizes how important it is for central government to have access to the best information and advice to ensure that the funding is appropriately targeted. Local government needs to be in a stronger position to work with central government, to share the decision-making around resource allocation and to ensure that there is alignment of policy, funding, service delivery, and monitoring. It will however, have to invest in developing its knowledge base to improve access to high-quality evidence (such as excellent data and research), application of up-to-date analytical technology, and closer engagement with the community.”*

The advocacy work that COMET does for education in Manukau, based on local data, knowledge and information, reflects the point that the Commission is making here. To avoid pockets of non-achievement and poor education outcomes being obscured by averages for the greater Auckland region, input from stakeholders that have a sound understanding of neighbourhood dynamics is going to be needed. These stakeholders will include Kaumatua and iwi leadership; Pacific Island people including church leaders and matai; civic leadership (for example, at community board level or among youth organisations); neighbourhood businesses; and local schools.

The Royal Commission noted that there seemed to be consistent support for the development of a regional social strategy (mostly in partnership with central government). It referred to the comment of one submission that "...despite 90% of spending on social well-being in the region coming from central government, this often occurs in the absence of a regional strategy." This is certainly reflected by COMET's experience in the education sector.

The international experience is that leadership and advocacy to address social issues is critical to addressing a potential future social deficit that will impact on all New Zealanders. At-risk individuals will need strengthened support through the recession so that New Zealand can "re-launch" itself in the world economy as a magnet for business and talent<sup>2</sup>. The Mayor of the [new] Auckland Council will need to have an effective means of understanding the dynamics of education (in the same manner in which COMET has played a role in informing our Mayor and Councillors in Manukau about important education matters affecting our communities) if Manukau's social context is to be both understood and acted on. To create the required platform for economic growth, collaborative action will be needed. COMET would like to note the role of the *Tomorrow's Manukau: Manukau Apopo* Strategic Steering Group in leading efforts to collaborate on key social, cultural, environmental initiatives for Manukau. As the Royal Commission has pointed out, "Effective efforts [are] characterized by integrated strategy, clarity of roles and responsibilities with formalized linkages between key agencies, and robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms. [Effective] strategies usually involved inter-agency approaches at both community and regional levels..."

In conclusion, leadership and advocacy, co-ordination and facilitation for education issues sit at the heart of COMET's contract with Council and our Statement of Intent; and at the heart of the Social Issues portfolio envisaged by the Royal Commission for Auckland Governance for the future of Auckland.

**COMET recommends that specific reference be made in the LTCCP to the importance of providing structures for addressing social issues that affect the future well-being of the people of Manukau.**

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<sup>2</sup> Chye-Ching Huang & Benedikte Jensen, 2009: 'Not just a case of a passing 'Recessionary Flu': The Budget must also address an underlying lack of economic fitness'. The New Zealand Institute, 29 April. [http://www.nzinstitute.org/Images/uploads/Not\\_just\\_a\\_case\\_of\\_a\\_recessionary\\_flu.pdf](http://www.nzinstitute.org/Images/uploads/Not_just_a_case_of_a_recessionary_flu.pdf)

# TOWARDS 2060: PRINCIPLES FOR GROWTH

Pages 91-97 of Volume I address the long-term future of our city. This section refers to the challenges of building physical and social infrastructure.

What we value about Manukau is the perspective of its leadership on the importance of social wellbeing. This platform for growth needs to continue into the new governance structures for Auckland.

Great cities have good planning for education, health and social services that support growth. In New Zealand these services are largely the responsibility of central government, yet they have significant impacts on well-being at the community level. The Royal Commission for Auckland Governance has already indicated that the connection between central and local government planning for social services needs to be strengthened. We agree. The statistics for social outcomes in Manukau are significantly different than for other parts of the region. The principles for growth outlined in the LTCCP under-emphasise the portfolio of council activities in the social issues arena. Integration of social services with local understanding of needs has to be written into the vision and principles underpinning future planning.

**COMET recommends that integrated planning for social services be included as a principle for growth.**

# ONE PLAN FOR AUCKLAND

Pages 15 – 18, Volume I describe the Key Issues for Manukau.

Clearly identifying targeted and effective social services as a principle for growth (page 91-97 above) provides a rationale for the inclusion [in the One Plan for Auckland] of a Growth through Skills programme.

As noted elsewhere in this submission, realizing the skills potential of Manukau's people provides the lever for economic growth. Because of the long time horizons for skills growth and development, it will be critical that in the current period of financial uncertainty there is ongoing investment in skills growth.

**COMET applauds the inclusion in the One Plan for Auckland a programme of work for Growth through Skills.**

# MAJOR PROJECTS

## TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALISATION

Reference - p.80, Volume I

The Auckland Regional Growth Strategy identified the city centre as an important regional hub. The Manukau City Council conducted a public consultation in 2002 about the city centre revitalisation. The vision was “[to create] a vibrant, safe and prosperous city centre”. To maintain the vision of the Manukau City Centre as a significant “downtown” will require long-term investment, and associated willingness from the [new] Auckland Council to maintain the focus on a city core in the southern part of Auckland. There is a risk that Manukau City Centre will lose its growth impetus as Auckland’s second-largest regional centre unless this LTCCP places emphasis on the development of specialist business and government services. Council should provide clear strategic signals about what those “specialist” services could be.

COMET recommends that the vision contained in the last LTCCP for a Manukau city centre that includes tertiary provision (a collaborative site with the MIT and others) be transferred into this LTCCP as a collaborative “Education Services Hub”.

COMET has already publicly endorsed the development of an Education Services Hub in the city centre revitalization area, as an adjunct to the development of tertiary provision. There is no doubt that active planning for future tertiary education provision in the city is important, especially once the current global recession bottoms out. There is a cost to the city when skills do not match the demands of business. That cost is the lost economic opportunity represented by the brakes on economic activity when skills do not match needs. A key social indicator of the overall skill levels in the population is the qualifications levels of working age adults. Particular emphasis should be placed in economic development planning in the city on improving this indicator, and other indicators associated with knowledge and skills. For Maori and Pacific Island people, the indicators are lower than for all other groups. For this reason, specific strategies to encourage Maori or Pacific Island peoples’ participation in learning will be crucial to achievement of the vision. It is important to

recognise the particular impetus that an Education Service Hub in the city centre could provide to raising educational achievement for the very diverse populations in this part of the Auckland region, especially if there is involvement of iwi agencies and economic development services for Maori and Pacific people.

An Education Services Hub in the centre of Manukau expands the concept of tertiary provision to a comprehensive education services approach that offers something significantly different to the provision currently available in the central Auckland isthmus area (downtown Auckland). The “education infrastructure” of a city<sup>3</sup> is a powerful economic development tool - investment has both a social and a commercial spin-off, as people and services are attracted to the area because of its concentration of expertise and convenience of co-located operations. A cluster approach has been shown to be highly successful in a business context. The reason is that geographic, cultural and institutional closeness provides organisations with special access, closer relationships, better information, powerful incentives to perform better, cross-fertilisation of ideas and so on, advantages that are difficult to achieve when they are located apart. It also offers the Manukau city centre area the unique opportunity to become a hub in specialist services that support learning for Maori or Pacific communities – that in time can have not only local significance, but national and international relevance.

The seeds for the collaboration exist in both central government strategies (for example in *Ka Hikitia: Maori Education Strategy 2008-2012*; and the *Pasifika Education Plan 2008-2012*; and in other related documents) and in the emerging discussion about the relationship between central government and local government strategies. Of particular interest could be the development of a focused geographical centre for investment in Maori and Pacific Island economic development through education; approaches for urban youth; or early childhood education services that service distinctive populations as part of the One Plan for Auckland.

This major project needs to be developed through visionary leadership from the mayor, councillors, and council officers, and a strategic commitment that enables innovative partnerships to develop and

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<sup>3</sup> Infrastructure includes early childhood centres, schools, tertiary institutions; support services such as special education services, guidance and careers advisory services, trustee services; professional development support for teachers (often associated with teacher training and research); specialist ICT services for schools; a city’s library and arts network; and the various government agencies that are located in the area with responsibility for various aspects of education policy and operations (such as the Ministry of Education, the Tertiary Education Commission and the Education Review Office).

offers incentives for investment from others. Good brokerage for this will be required. Early research into an education services hub would be able to quantify the potential economic benefit to the city, and should form part of the strategy and policy programme in 2010.

**COMET recommends that an education services hub be specifically identified in the LTCCP for the town centre redevelopment and revitalisation plan.**

# STRATEGY AND POLICY PROGRAMME 2009-2010

Reference p. 78, Volume 2

COMET is pleased to note that an Education Strategy is part of the Thriving Economy Strategy and Policy Programme. This strategy has been part of the development agenda since 2005, and COMET has put considerable effort into the development of a report to the Council on the framework for a strategy (*Working Together: Mahi Tahi Tatou*).

We support its inclusion as part of the Towards 2060 Policy Programme - although we would be very concerned if this was delayed until 2060!

**COMET supports the inclusion of the Education Strategy as part of the Towards 2060 Policy Programme umbrella.**

APPENDIX ONE: SUMMARY TABLE – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A MANUKAU EDUCATION STRATEGY.

SECTION	RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION OPPORTUNITIES
<b>OVERALL THEME</b>	THAT Working Together becomes the central theme for the Manukau Education Strategy	
<b>EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</b>	<p>THAT A Desired Outcome of the Manukau Education Strategy be: “All children in Manukau participate in quality early childhood education”.</p> <p>THAT participation in Early Childhood Education becomes a key priority for action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Manukau Early Childhood Education Action Plan</li> <li>• Establish family service centres in conjunction with / alongside mainstream education services (ECE and schools) AND/OR</li> <li>• Build early childhood education and/or family services centres on school sites in all decile 1 – 3 communities- An Advocacy Action Opportunity</li> <li>• Fund programmes that open up pathways to Māori, Pasifika and migrant adults for careers in the early childhood sector.</li> <li>• Remove regulatory barriers to establishing new services</li> <li>• Build new centres</li> </ul>
<b>MĀTAURANGA MAORI</b>	<p>THAT dialogue on Working Together with Māori for a Manukau Māori Education Strategy continues under the sponsorship and leadership of the Treaty of Waitangi Committee.</p> <p>THAT the Manukau Māori Education Strategy and its Desired Outcomes be developed using technical resources within the Treaty of Waitangi unit of Manukau City Council in consultation with Māori Stakeholders.</p> <p>THAT the Desired Outcomes of the Manukau Education Strategy be aligned with the Ministry of Education Ka Hikitia strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy for a “whole of community” approach to the Schools Plus goal (that all young people are in education, skills, or structured learning, relevant to their needs and abilities, until the age of 18) – to ensure that the goal meets the needs of Māori in Manukau (see also page 15).</li> </ul>
<b>SCHOOLING SECTOR</b>	<p>THAT Desired Outcomes of the Manukau Education Strategy be:</p> <p>“Working Together to engage Families and Communities in children’s learning”</p> <p>“Communities and Schools Working Together for Student Achievement”</p> <p>“Businesses and Schools Working Together”</p> <p>“Working Together for 15-19 year olds”</p> <p>“Working Together to sustain our languages and heritage”</p> <p>“Working Together to ensure that all our children and young people are active, healthy and ready to learn”</p> <p>“Working Together to enable schools to produce confident, innovative and skilled people”</p> <p>“Working Together for our Environment and Sustainability”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate or support programmes that connect families to the learning of their children</li> <li>• Establish an Education Services hub as part of the city centre revitalisation project</li> <li>• Facilitate school-business through a dedicated relationships unit/team</li> <li>• Become a Schools Plus champion</li> <li>• Draft a “Being Bilingual” economic development policy</li> <li>• Support the work of the Schools Accord for Health</li> <li>• Create shared data or information. Support school public relations work and community accountability processes.</li> </ul>
<b>TERTIARY EDUCATION / LIFE LONG LEARNING</b>	<p>THAT Desired Outcomes of the Manukau Education Strategy be</p> <p>“Working Together to meet the skills needs of the future”.</p> <p>“Working Together to create learning opportunities for all adults for social, leisure and personal development purposes”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Manukau Skills Council</li> <li>• Establish a Tertiary Education Campus and education services hub in the Manukau city centre.</li> <li>• Provide library, leisure, arts and community education services for all communities.</li> </ul>