

# Sustainability and Well-being



*Hauraki Youth promoting  
Sustainability for Hauraki*

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***What topics are covered in this section?***

***What is Sustainability?***

***What do the Four Well-beings Mean?***

***Balancing of well-beings***

- The Sustainability Tuner (balancing of well-beings)

***Making the Connections –  
Sustainability, Well-being and  
Community Outcomes***

- How does Council achieve sustainability through well-beings?
- How do Community Outcomes fit in?

# Sustainability and Well-being

## What is Sustainability?

### What is Sustainability?

Sustainability is often identified with environmental protection or preservation of natural resources, but it is much more than that. Sustainable development is a balanced, inclusive approach that seeks to meet the needs of today's generation, without reducing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This idea provides the foundation for the Hauraki Community Plan 2009-19.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires that when Councils make sustainably based decisions for the community they must consider and balance:

- the social, economic, and cultural well-being of people and communities; and
- the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment; and
- the needs of future generations.

For many years these considerations have informally been the basis of decisions made by the Hauraki District Council. In recent years they have been formalised in Council's decision-making framework.

In practice, sustainability is about bringing together planning and delivery of services across the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-beings at the same time. This is especially important when developing and putting in place plans to achieve agreed Community Outcomes.

In previous years the emphasis for significant decisions was largely based on cost with other well-beings often taking a lower priority. As sustainability concepts have developed over the past few years, there is a growing understanding that all well-beings should be considered and the most appropriate balance struck between well-beings when making significant decisions.

The aim of sustainability is for harmony and balance between all of the four well-beings. This is achieved by getting the most positive improvement for the well-beings when making decisions, while at the same time minimising the negative effects. Sustainable development will not be achieved if only one or two of the four areas of well-being are addressed. Often

Council has to balance the positive and negative aspects on different well-beings. Very few decisions affect only one of the four areas of well-being.

In order to achieve a balance for the Hauraki District many organisations need to work together – locally, regionally and nationally. Council is one of the organisations taking a key leadership role in progressing the community's vision for itself (community outcomes). Council is also a partner, working alongside others as the lead agency in some cases and as a supportive participant in others. There are also many projects that other agencies will undertake without Council involvement.

#### QUICK FACTS

#### Did you Know?

#### Sustainability

The history behind the recognition and inevitable use of sustainability principals in New Zealand stems back to 1941 where they were apparent in the Soil Conservation and River Control Act 1941. Since then 'sustainability' has become increasingly important and is now a key principle used in almost every sector of communities.

Sustainability, often referred to as 'sustainable development', was given global attention when it was defined by the Brundtland Report in 1982 as:

'Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

In other words, we (in this case the Council) need to think about the effects of our decisions and actions. This is in order to make sure that we do not create a Hauraki District that is suitable for the current generation, but unable to provide for our children's future.

# Sustainability and Well-being

## What do the four well-beings mean?

### What do the four well-beings mean?

Council has a leadership and advocacy role in promoting the enhancement of the cultural, economic, environmental and social well-beings of the community in all its activities.

Local Government promotes well-being at a local level and Central Government at the national level. Internationally the addressing of well-beings depends on the governance structures, directions and resources of countries or international organisations (such as the United Nations).

The four well-beings were introduced to Councils through the Local Government Act 2002, section 14(h). Each of these well-beings is intended to be addressed in conjunction with one another, and therefore should not be considered in isolation. During instances where an action or decision may not affect a well-being, it should be noted.

Both Councillors and staff at Hauraki District Council have taken ownership of sustainable techniques in the day to day decision-making of Council, and actively encourage the Hauraki Community to do so also. Council does this by using decision-making tools as shown in the section *'Making the connections – sustainability, well-beings and community outcomes'* on page 90.

The following table describes the way that Hauraki District Council has interpreted the meaning of each of the four well-beings.

<p><b>Cultural Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sharing of beliefs, values, customs, behaviours and identities reflected through our community.</li> <li>▪ Actively participating in recreational, creative and cultural activities.</li> <li>▪ An understanding and respect for cultural traditions.</li> <li>▪ Protecting ways that people can demonstrate their spiritual beliefs (such as religious activities).</li> <li>▪ Protect, maintain, retain, interpret and express our arts, history and heritage.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Economic Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Generation of employment and wealth that people require to support their needs and those of their family.</li> <li>▪ Development and use of skills within the community.</li> <li>▪ Support and provision of appropriate business environment for the District (e.g. professional advice for new businesses).</li> <li>▪ Promoting the District as a great place to live and do business.</li> <li>▪ Provisions of infrastructure that supports economic well-being e.g. roads.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The natural and physical environment can sustainably support the community and its activities.</li> <li>▪ How well our natural environment can adapt and change to human activities where necessary.</li> <li>▪ Animal/plant life protected.</li> <li>▪ Good quality air and water is protected and enhanced.</li> <li>▪ High quality soils are not compromised for future production.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Social Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social well-being covers those aspects of life that society collectively agrees are important for a person's happiness, quality of life and welfare through physical and mental well-being.</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure that ensures health and well-being (e.g. water, wastewater, solid waste, roading).</li> <li>▪ Everyone being able to have access to their basic needs such as food, housing, health and education (through affordability or infrastructure).</li> <li>▪ Personal safety and freedom from fear.</li> <li>▪ Everyone being able to participate in and use what the District offers.</li> </ul>

# Sustainability and Well-being

## Balancing of well-beings

### Balancing of well-beings

This section describes the concept of *'the balancing of well-beings'* and how Council attempts to balance well-being. It also introduces a graphic representation, which will be used within this document to show how Council sees its activities in relation to the balance the four well-beings.

'The balancing act' is a term Council uses to describe the way in which it attempts to address the four well-beings in an equal and balanced manner. This balancing act with regards to well-beings creates a number of questions.

- How are well-beings balanced?
- Can well-beings be balanced?
- Should we actually attempt to balance well-beings?

The response to these questions will depend on the nature of the issue, and is not always easy to answer. As a rule, it would be expected that the four well-beings would be addressed to an extent which is positive and balanced throughout. Put another way, positive effects on well-beings should be the aim while minimising negative effects as much as possible.

This, however, is not always possible for decisions made by Council, and often there will be an imbalance of well-beings on a given decision. When this happens Council is left with a decision of how to create a better balance, and often the answer is by way of adaptation or mitigation. Other times however it is just not possible.

For example, if a new road is built to service a hospital, then it is likely that there will be negative environmental impacts associated with the construction, maintenance and use of that road. However, the social and economic impacts would be such an advantage to the community that they would outweigh those negative effects.

In the above example social well-being would include access to medical services (in some cases life saving), social services provided through the hospital and welfare system and access for family and friends to these services.

Economic well-being would include the jobs that having the hospital would bring to the area, the wealth that would accompany it, the business attracted by the service and promotion of the District as a well serviced place to live. In this example there are likely to be little or no cultural well-being effects.

In allowing the construction of the road Council may decide that some negative environmental consequences need to be offset. For example recycled aggregates could be used on the road, animal underpasses could be built under the road, and the construction of an area with indigenous or exotic planting near the hospital may be done in order to provide a recreational area for visitors and patients.

Although this may not balance the positive and negative aspects of the well-beings in their entirety, this project would then show mitigation methods for the imbalance and therefore be more socially acceptable and advantageous (if not equally) for all aspects of well-being.

### **The Sustainability Tuner (a balancing of well-beings)**

In order to create a visual adaptation of the balancing (or otherwise) of well-beings throughout this Plan, the representation of graphic equalizers common on stereo equipment will be displayed; this representation is referred to as a **'sustainability tuner'**.



On a hi-fi, a number of equalisers (bass, mid-range, treble etc) must be balanced in order to achieve the best sound. For example if you are tuning your bass in order to ensure that your neighbours don't complain about the noise, a lower level will be necessary. It is tricky but eventually you get it just right so that you can hear it, but it's not shaking the house down!

# Sustainability and Well-being

## Balancing of Well-beings

With Hauraki District's 'sustainability tuner', the equalisers are replaced by the four well-beings. It is then Council's responsibility (sometimes on their own, and sometimes in partnership) to tune or balance them in such a way that all well-beings are either maintained or enhanced by the proposal. By analysing the well-beings Council has a good indication of whether or not the decision or activity is likely to have a net increase in the well-beings, and whether to consider mitigation measures to offset negative effects.

The criteria behind the allocation of numbers (both positive and negative) on the sustainability tuner have been aligned with Council's definition of the well-beings and can be seen in appendix 8 on page 299.

The criteria that relate to each activity has been identified; and ratings have been given for each to demonstrate the impact to the well-being in order to show how well Council currently feels that the well-beings are balanced at an activity level.

It is considered that any imbalances identified will result in attention being paid to mitigation or adaptation measures to resolve them. This may not take effect immediately, but during the course of this plan.

The sustainability tuner is pictured to the right, and can be found at the beginning of each activity within the groups of activities.

In the instance of the example of the road to the hospital discussed previously, the effects of mitigation on the well-beings are shown in the representation to the right. In the mitigated option there has been an attempt to address both the negative effects of the environmental impacts and the lack of cultural impacts. This can be seen by the positive shift in the tuner.

### Example One: Proposed New Road Built

#### Balancing of well-beings The Sustainability Tuner

Score	Economic	Environmental	Social	Cultural
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				
0				
-1				
-2				
-3				
-4				
-5				

Please see page 88 for an explanation of how to use the sustainability tuner and appendix 8 for the criteria.

### Example Two: Proposed New Road Built with mitigation

#### Balancing of well-beings The Sustainability Tuner

Score	Economic	Environmental	Social	Cultural
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				
0				
-1				
-2				
-3				
-4				
-5				

Please see page 88 for an explanation of how to use the sustainability tuner and appendix 8 for the criteria.

# Sustainability and Well-being

Making the connections – sustainability, well-being and community outcomes

## Making the connections – sustainability, well-being and community outcomes

### How does Council achieve sustainability through well-beings?

In order to ensure Council is acting as sustainably as possible it attempts to balance the four well-beings. There are a number of tools that can be used when decision making to do this, and Council has worked hard to create mechanisms that work for Hauraki District. In some cases however a balance of well-beings has not been achieved. Using these types of tools and approaches and encouraging or advocating for a general sustainable mindset, Council can be confident in making valuable and balanced decisions to the benefit of the community as they are :-

- Considering and assessing the effects of a decision on the four well-beings, and on people and communities.
- Attempting to mitigate any adverse effects caused by the decision in hand so as to make it as environmentally friendly as possible.
- Taking into consideration the needs of today's generation, without reducing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

#### Hauraki Youth promoting Sustainability for Hauraki



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#### QUICK FACTS

#### Did you Know?

#### Kaitiakitanga

**Sustainability is not a new concept – it has been around for hundreds of years and within different cultures.**

For Maori, protecting the environment is holistically embedded in their belief system and way of life. Assuring the kaitiakitanga of their taonga or natural resources ensures the health and longevity of the generations to follow.

Maori believe that if you look after the land it will look after you, and over the generations sustainable indicators have been passed on by word of mouth in order to ensure the correct guardianship of the land and resources on it, and in the seas around it. Examples of indicators which Maori have and still use are:

**Matariki:** the use of constellations and stars, forming a calendar or indicator allowing for the correct determination of the seasons.

**Kūmara harvest:** Matariki plays a significant role in determining when to plant foods such as kūmara (sweet potatoes). Clear, bright stars indicate a good season. But if they are hazy and bunched together, a cold winter is predicted, and planting was delayed.

**Kaitiakitanga:** meaning the action of being a guardian, or a caretaker.

**Kaitiaki:** (noun) caretaker or guardian.

**Tanga:** (a suffix added to nouns to designate the quality derived from the base noun) e.g. the action of guardian.

**Taonga:** a gift or treasure that is not owned by you, but by all.

# Sustainability and Well-being

## Making the Connections – Sustainability, Well-being and Community Outcomes

Some of the decision-making tools that Council currently uses to promote sustainability or to ensure that sustainable options are considered are listed in the table below:

Council Policy	How is this a sustainable tool?
Significance Policy	As part of this policy Council is required to consider if the decision impacts on the well-beings of the community both in the current climate and into the future. Council is also required to consider the future generations of Hauraki District.
Decisions Making Matrix	A matrix designed to aid decision makers when making decisions on capital projects or activities which are likely to have a large effect on the community. This requires consideration of all well-beings.
Policy Template	Internally this template ensures that Council has taken into consideration the four well-beings when reviewing or proposing new policies.
Sustainability Tuner	Criteria based method of considering in their entirety the effects of a decision on the four well-beings.
Consultation Policy	This policy along with section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002, ensures that the community can have a say on Council proposals.
Asset Management Plans	They provide information with regards to all aspects of the asset or activity concerned. As part of these plans both positive and negative effects are identified, and often mitigation measures discussed with the intention of applying them. This is the first port of call for indications of sustainable practices.
Impact Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cultural</li> <li>▪ Economic</li> <li>▪ Environmental</li> <li>▪ Social</li> </ul>	<p>Impact Assessments are sometimes required prior to making a significant decision to evaluate the effects on the four well-beings. In most cases it is an environmental impact assessment which is conducted, however there is an increasing need to assess other well-beings.</p> <p>It is not always Council that is responsible for doing these assessments, and in most cases they will be conducted by the organisation or person responsible for creating the need for them.</p>

### How do community outcomes fit in?

In addition to acting sustainably and attempting to balance the well-beings, the activities which Council and other organisations within the District deliver need to align with the Hauraki Community Outcomes where possible.

The diagram on the next page demonstrates how Council and the Community work separately in some cases and also in partnership in others, to continue to progress the things that the community have said are important.

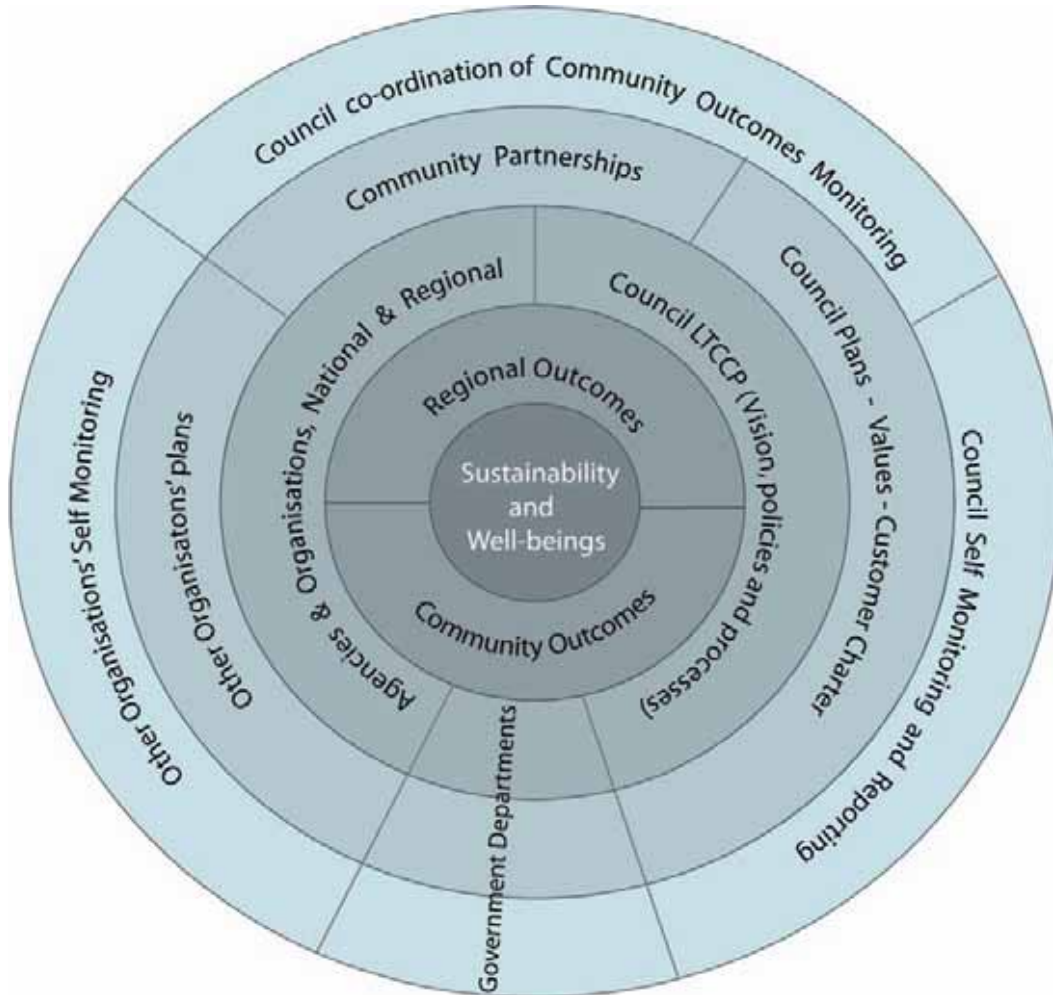
The policies and plans of other organisations are also important to this process. For example Council works closely with national strategies and policies which include but are not limited to:

- NZ Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa
- NZ Positive Ageing Strategy
- NZ Tourism Strategy 2015
- Environment Waikato Regional Plan and Regional Coastal Plan

# Sustainability and Well-being

## *Making the Connections – Sustainability, Well-being and Community Outcomes*

The Hauraki Community Plan 2009-19 has a key role in drawing together Council's purposes, and all of its plans and policies that already contribute to the progressing of outcomes both at a District and Regional level. Progress will be maximised if everyone works together with the concept of sustainability development in mind.



**Diagram: Council – community partnerships**

Please see page 17, 'Key Community Issues' section of this Plan, for an opportunity to express your views on how you see Council's role in sustainability.