

## 7.0 Determining the Process

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The local authority is free to develop and determine for itself the process to be used to identify and prioritise outcomes for its community<sup>46</sup>.

### 7.1 Inter-Council Project Team

The local authorities in Northland agreed to a joint approach to the process of determining regional community outcomes for the Northland Region. A Project Team with representatives from the Far North, Kaipara and Whangarei District Councils and from the Northland Regional Council was established to oversee the project. A project brief was prepared and agreed to by the Project Team.

### 7.2 Engagement of External Consultant

The councils recognised that they would need specialist assistance at critical stages of the process. ACNielsen (NZ) Ltd., an international research firm, was asked to submit a document describing their proposed approach to undertaking the research. ACNielsen was successful in their proposal and was engaged as consultant to assist the Councils. ACNielsen was responsible for:

- Analysing existing statements of regional community outcomes;
- Undertaking and reporting on focus groups, stakeholder meetings, wananga and the telephone survey;
- Preparation and finalisation of this final report.

ACNielsen’s proposed approach for the Northland research, was based upon their past experience working with the Taranaki Regional Council, New Plymouth, South Taranaki and Stratford district councils who worked together in 2003 to identify the outcomes for their community. This comprehensive approach worked successfully and was adapted to suit the requirements of the Northland project team.

The methods selected focused at a regional level but enabled local idiosyncrasies to be identified where appropriate. Key characteristics of the Northland population and community were considered when undertaking the research. The use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods sought to ensure that the results of the consultation were as reliable and representative of the community’s views as possible. Information gathered through qualitative methods such as focus groups and stakeholder meetings, has provided an identification and understanding of the range of issues involved and the intensity with which views and attitudes are held. Quantitative methods such as the use of a formal telephone survey were necessary to determine with certainty the extent to which views and attitudes were held throughout the wider population. The findings from all of the methodologies have been reviewed and considered in the preparation of this report.

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<sup>46</sup> See section 91(3)

## **Determining the Process, Continued**

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The councils and ACNielsen acknowledged that an independent and skilled facilitator was required to facilitate the stakeholder meetings and wananga. Therefore ACNielsen worked with an independent contractor, Laurie Porima of LLE Research Limited who facilitated all of these meetings and prepared the report on them.

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