



people's panel



People's Panel Community Funding Policy consultation

25 May 2012

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2 Key findings

Key findings

Regarding the draft Community Funding Policy:

- 80% of respondents agreed with the types of community funding proposals included and excluded from the draft policy
- 84% agreed with the proposal to align local funding to the priorities of local board plans
- 79% agreed with the proposed approach for community funding applications that benefit multiple local board areas
- 77% agreed with aligning regional funding to the priorities and outcomes of the Auckland Plan
- 77% agreed that community funding should be provided based on the outcomes a group delivers
- 82% agreed with the proposed assessment process for community funding applications
- 65% agreed with the proposed number of funding rounds for both local and regional funding applications
- 90% agreed with the proposed accountability measures for community funding recipients

3 Background

3.1 Survey background

Auckland Council provides grants to community groups, allowing them to carry out a range of activities, programmes and events. The region's former councils had a number of policies and schemes for community funding, but they were all different. The council has now put forward a new, consistent way to allocate funding, which will ensure all groups across the region are treated equitably.

The draft Community Funding Policy proposes that funding is allocated based on the outcomes of a group's proposed activities and their impact on the community. The policy will also introduce new measures to make sure the way council delivers community funding is open, transparent and accountable.

This survey was designed to capture People's Panel members' views on a number of key aspects of the draft Community Funding Policy. Survey responses, together with the results of other stakeholder consultation, will be used to help shape the final policy before it is adopted.

The following report summarises the key results and comments identified in the survey.

3.2 About the People's Panel

The People's Panel aims to provide an opportunity for Aucklanders to get involved with a range of council issues, giving feedback by regularly completing online surveys and getting involved with focus groups and other activities as needed.

The panel ideally supplements other research, consultation and engagement activities used to provide public perceptions to help inform decision-making processes. Panellists are recruited to be 'typical' members of the public – that is they include members of the public who come from a range of backgrounds and a range of levels of involvement with the council.

At the time of surveying there were 8033 people registered with the panel, with representation from residents of each local board area and by age group and ethnicity. The People's Panel is not yet representative of the wider Auckland population and further recruitment is under way to improve participation from particular areas, age groups and ethnicities.

For more information about the People's Panel visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/peoplespanel

3.3 Methodology

This survey was open from Monday 30 April to Tuesday 8 May 2012 and one reminder was sent to those who had not completed the survey. In total 911 completed surveys were received.

The feedback has been analysed in two ways:

- For the tick box questions, responses to each option have been reported as proportions of the total sample and presented as charts (and tables in the appendix).
- Responses to open-ended questions ranged from one-word answers to lengthy comments with several points and ideas. Key themes from these comments have been identified and ordered by frequency. A selection of comments has been included in the report, to illustrate these themes.

Please note that results in charts and tables presented in this report may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were allowed for some questions and/or as a result of rounding.

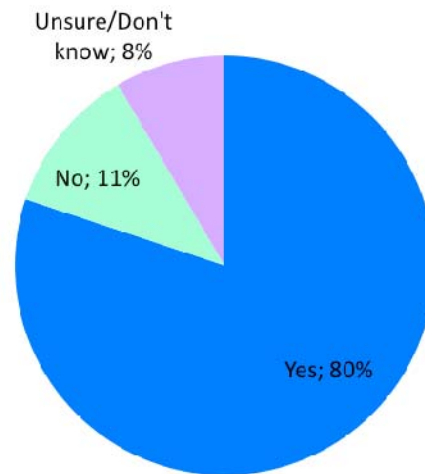
4 Survey results

4.1 Types of proposals included in the policy

The survey listed the types of community funding applications that would be included in the policy, and also outlined the types of activities that the draft policy does not include, such as:

- retrospective costs
- overseas travel
- debt repayments
- medical expenses
- prize money or entrance fees
- legal expenses
- activities that promote religious or political purposes
- purchase of alcohol
- activities run solely for commercial profit or individual gain
- loans or loan guarantees
- rates remittances to individuals, community groups or sporting organisations
- grants or funding agreements to support capital developments
- procurement contracts.

Do you agree with these exclusions?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 895

A large majority of survey participants agreed with the above exclusions and there was widespread agreement across panellists from different demographic segments (i.e. there were no significant differences between people of different age groups, ethnicities, genders or local board areas).

Panellists were asked to provide comments about these exclusions and 289 people did so. Their responses are summarised below.

Several people re-iterated their support for excluding these activities and limiting the opportunity for cost blowouts - provided the community was still receiving adequate funding where needed. Others however felt that they needed more information about the nature of the exclusions before they could decide one way or the other.

A number of people felt that certain activities (such as rates remittances, capital developments, activities for religious purposes etc) may be appropriate in certain circumstances and that these could be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Any comments about these exclusions?	Number of responses n=289	% of responses
Generally agree / as long as it benefits the general community	50	17%
General concerns regarding activities not mentioned/ more information is needed	48	17%
Rates remittances should be included for community groups and sports organisations	47	16%
Capital development should be included in some cases	45	16%
Cost and budget concerns/ council should focus only on essential services	31	11%
Spiritual/religious groups should be included/ separate these from political activities	27	9%
Loans, debt repayments and retrospective costs may be appropriate in some cases	12	4%
Overseas travel may be appropriate in some cases	11	4%
Legal expenses may be appropriate in some cases	9	3%
Tobacco, gambling, pokies and illegal activity should be excluded/ concerns about the effects of alcohol	8	3%
Prize money/ entrance fees should be considered	4	1%
Other	15	5%

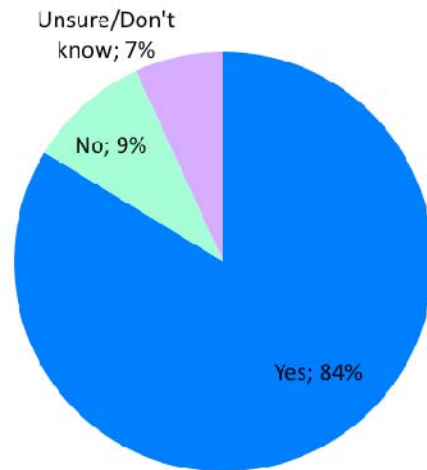
Selection of comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A lot of opportunities leading to abuse with the above exclusions and I support it fully</i> • <i>Any grants should of course be for the betterment of the community or club not personal gain or bills</i> • <i>I think the idea of these exclusions are excellent. The headings listed would suggest they are personal expenses</i> • <i>We need to be specific and only fund key items for important community events and groups</i> • <i>To a certain extent I do agree however more information is needed for the above categories e.g. specify exactly what is excluded in each of the categories mentioned above - too vague</i> • <i>Unsure would need more detail to understand the pros/cons for including any of the exclusions</i> • <i>Community development, would this include marae initiatives that support, progress and develop community development or environmental sustainability. An example would be environment & sustainability program on planting, vegetation restoration, harvesting resources i.e. flax, utilising natural resources i.e. weaving, carving, then using resources for the marae or individual use etc..... So it would be a program from planting areas, understanding environment conditions, utilising the resources for various purposes etc...</i>

- *Community gardens are a wonderful way to bring people together and serve a useful purpose. Not mentioned in activities. Should be considered*
- *I believe there should be an exception for some community support groups. This could be covered under community development*
- *I support activities promoting religion and the remittance of rates to some individuals or groups should be considered on an individual basis*
- *I question "activities that promote religious or political purposes". Political - NO. But I wonder if excluding religious purposes needs to be a little more flexible. It may exclude traditional cultural celebrations for other races such as Diwali, Ramadan, Hindu festivals, Bhuddist celebrations, even Christmas! Funding of events such as these are important to the integration of other cultures in our environment and tolerance of other religious belief or customs or introduction of food or dress which may enhance our objective of a liveable cosmopolitan city*
- *I see that the draft policy (p8) excludes loans; rates remittances; capital development grants; and procurement contracts. Perhaps the other activities mentioned above should also be clearly stated at p8. Surely legal expenses might be a legitimate activity to claim on in certain circumstances? Who decides whether an activity promotes religious/political purposes? These are potentially very delicate areas*
- *I would like to know that grants to support community capital developments were available. If not covered under this policy, then in another.*

4.2 Local funding

Panellists were told that the draft Community Funding Policy proposes “that local boards allocate their individual community funding budgets in accordance with the direction and objectives set out in their local board plans. We’re suggesting that local funding applicants demonstrate how their proposal would meet the priorities of the relevant local board.”

Do you support local funding being aligned to the priorities of local board plans?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 860

This proposal was widely supported, and 84% of respondents agreed. Again, there were no significant differences in opinion between people from different demographic groups.

Panellists were asked to provide comments about the proposal to align local funding to the priorities of local board plans, and 283 people did so. Their responses are summarised below.

While most people agreed with this proposal, there were some concerns that flexibility might be needed to ensure that 'worthy' projects could still be funded even if they hadn't been included in the local board plans – some felt that the local board plans may not prioritise the 'right' things. Having said that, there was agreement with many of the key themes included in the local board plans.

Some felt it was important to tailor the funding to the specific needs of the local community, and some thought this should not include commercial enterprises.

Others had concerns about local board accountability, cost over runs and some of the specific local board priorities described in the survey.

Any comments about local funding being aligned to the priorities of local board plans?	Number of responses n=283	% of responses
Needs to be flexible to ensure groups/projects not disadvantaged even if not in local board plan	55	19%
Generally agree/ agree with specific theme in local board plans	53	19%
Funding should be tailored to community need or benefit / cater for various community needs / not commercial enterprises	43	15%
Cost concerns/ funds distribution/ boards need to be accountable/ regulated	41	14%
Unsure/ don't have enough information / too vague/broad	21	7%
Focus only on core infrastructure/ user pays	12	4%
Concerns about what the 'priorities' are	12	4%
Disagree with protecting rural areas from sprawl	12	4%
Generally disagree/ disagree with specific theme in local board plans	12	4%
Support for volunteers/ community group involvement in planning and decision making	9	3%
Disagree with funding sport activities here	6	2%
Suggestions for other key themes	6	2%
Other	14	5%

Selection of comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This means that funding for a project that would value the community but is outside the local board plans may not get funding. As not all local initiatives get to the local board plans, funding such as these should allow for these initiatives especially if they are small projects</i> • <i>But good ideas that require immediate attention but are not in line with local board plan should equally be accommodated, if such activity cannot be deferred.</i> • <i>Advice is the best way but to give boards the ability to spend the funding is too dangerous as some members may concentrate on pet schemes</i> • <i>But that of course means we need to make sure the local boards plans have the right priorities, and I don't think that is always the case at present</i> • <i>I agree local boards are better able to assess the requirements within their local areas for the scope outlined above</i> • <i>Our local Board plan leaves some important things out (ie no reference to the arts) and is</i>

also biased to the north (away from our area - the west) so using the plan to prioritise grants would perpetuate geographical and sector based inequity.

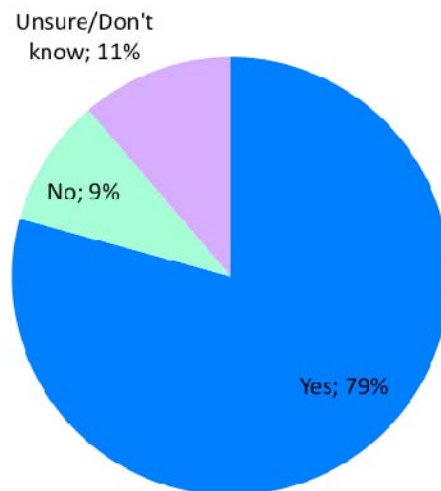
- Any funding of ratepayers money should be to projects or community programmes that are open to and to the benefit of all of the community. No funding should be available to commercial or business enterprises as the benefit will be to them rather than the community. EG, Town Centers.*
- In former Rodney, this is very very lacking compared with the local interest which the Rodney council used to display. there is a massive failure of application of policy at this time*
- There are some good ideas in this lot but I would hate to see the wealthy building and business owners being subsidised in the name of a flash town centre*
- This may be best overseen, as local boards can be extremely wasteful. Example is Waitakere Local Board's enormous investment into Lopdell House (19 million I think). A local eye-sore old slab building (referred by some as Titirangi Icon) has had an insane amount of money invested into it (should be 1-2 mil max). Golden handshakes may have occurred with interested contractors. Local boards do not seem to share the objective of sticking to the basics and keeping rates down, which I think is the priority.*

4.3 Multi-board funding

The survey explained that “Community groups are not necessarily organised by Auckland Council’s local board boundaries. So we need to make sure that community groups that carry out activities across multiple local board areas, have the same access to community funding as those that carry out activities in one local board. Like local funding, local boards would be responsible for assessing and allocating multi-board funding. We’re suggesting that applications must demonstrate:

- a link to each of the relevant local board plans;
- where the proposed activity is to be undertaken and the communities that will benefit from it;
- the total amount of funding sought;
- the minimum amount of funding required to undertake the proposed activity;
- the proportion of funding sought from each local board”

Do you support the proposed approach for community funding applications that benefit multiple local board areas?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 843

The proposed multi-board funding approach was broadly supported by People’s Panel respondents. Comments associated with this question are summarised below. A number of people reaffirmed their general support for the proposed multi-board funding model.

While most people agreed with this proposal, there were a number of comments and concerns regarding how the local boards would work together, communicate with each other, agree priorities and monitor the outcomes of the funding. Several panellists felt the boards would potentially struggle to work together effectively and that the system would need to be easily managed (and easy for applicants to understand). Also, some felt that council officers or some form of independent body would need to oversee the process to ensure the boards worked together and that funding was allocated equitably.

Any comments about the proposed funding model for community funding applications that benefit multiple local board areas?	Number of responses n=213	% of responses
Yes / generally agree	37	17%
Needs to be monitored / managed carefully between the boards to ensure accountability	32	15%
Keep simple/ minimise red tape/ flexibility	28	13%
Concerns regarding administration/ logistics/ duplication	25	12%
Funding distribution needs to be fair across boards	23	11%
Concerns regarding communication between boards/ cooperation	21	10%
Spending concerns - keep ratepayer funding / council involvement to a minimum	14	7%
Unsure/ not enough info/ too complicated	14	7%
Small groups/ local community should benefit	13	6%
Other	12	6%

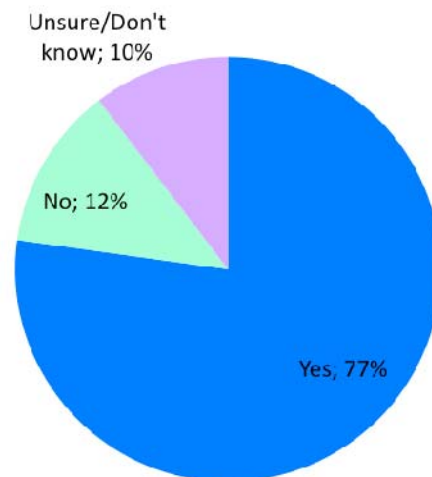
Selection of comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I can see the merit in multi board funding</i> <i>I support this list but think that the linkage between relevant Board plans could be difficult to achieve in reality.</i> <i>I do not oppose this as it is needed. However I can see infighting between local boards who identify different priorities for funding. Or where personalities do not get along well.</i> <i>Again it depends on what the funding is for. However, the criteria should always be that of the benefit for the greatest number of people, which in principle probably means multi-board funding may be appropriate.</i> <i>I believe there should be an audit/check so that the funding is not taken over by the stronger area.</i> <i>My approval of the above requirements is conditional upon the barriers to multi-board funding be set at a very high level which may lead to the obvious conclusion that all multi-board funding proposals should be subjected to open ratepayer polls before other administrative costs started to accrue. But that of course means we need to make sure the local boards plans have the right priorities, and I don't think that is always the case at present</i> <i>I hope that there will be officers willing to explain and assist here. The sentiments are fine but unless you show some support many people will feel themselves daunted by the paperwork and the level of knowledge required.</i> <i>I know applicants have to prove what they are doing is beneficial to the community but it sounds like getting money is going to be super complicated - again I am not up with the play so maybe I'm way off base with this.</i>

- *Should an application be successful, the allocation of funds should be monitored, i.e. see it goes where it was specified it would in the original application.*
- *Board’s activities are bound to overlap and even mirror each other. The idea of the SC [Super City] is that we are all in the same waka and trying to avoid duplication of facilities and ideas*
- *Boards should talk to each other re funding across boundaries so that there is not overlap or exclusion. These applications probably should be considered by a subcommittee of members of each board so they are considered fairly.*
- *I question how local boards are going to agree which priorities take precedence. Should Multi board events not become regional and be funded regionally and not locally?*
- *How do you ensure that multiple local boards will consider multi-board funding applications at the same time in order to expedite decision-making? What happens if there is a disagreement between boards over a funding request?*
- *However, as per my previous comment - and perhaps more importantly with multi-board funding applications because they affect more people, there should be a threshold at which additional assessment criteria kick in. Funding applications above a certain amount should require the applicant to consult with the community about the proposal and the outcomes of this consultation should be included in the application. This would be prudent because the Local Board Plans may not have been developed with a suitable amount of buy-in from the community but instead may be somewhat generic. And the aspirations of the Local Board are not necessarily consistent with the community's own outcomes (which also means that consultation with the Local Board is not enough to be counted as 'consultation with the community').*

4.4 Regional funding

Panellists were told that “Many of Auckland’s community groups undertake activities that impact the entire region. These groups often carry out activities that directly meet council’s strategic priorities, so we’ve developed a new way for funding the groups that undertake activities of a regional nature. We’re proposing the creation of seven regional funding schemes, based on priorities outlined in the Auckland Plan.”

Do you support aligning regional funding to the priorities and outcomes of the Auckland Plan as suggested?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 829

This proposal also received broad support from survey respondents, with over three-quarters of People’s Panellists saying they supported the regional funding model.

Comments associated with this question are summarised below. As with the multi-board funding above, a number of people raised concerns regarding how the seven regional funding schemes would be collectively managed to ensure there was equitable distribution, little duplication, and that the most worthwhile projects were prioritised.

Again, some raised concerns about the potential level of council spending and the appropriate use of ratepayer funds, and some commented about the specifics of the seven Auckland Plan priorities.

Any comments about aligning regional funding to the priorities and outcomes of the Auckland Plan as suggested?	Number of responses n=259	% of responses
Concerns about balance/ flexibility / auditing/ double ups between the funding areas	95	37%
Ratepayer concerns / council spending concern	41	16%
General positive comments	34	13%
Do not agree with some of the funding schemes being proposed/ some left out	26	10%
Events funding needs defining/ or excluding	25	10%
Eldery/disabled need catering for	18	7%
Concerned with specific groups/ decision makers with agendas	17	7%
Need more info/ unsure	16	6%
Concerns regarding what 'culture' covers	10	4%
Too complicated	8	3%
Enviromental issues should be handled locally	7	3%
Other	11	4%

Selection of comments

- *Unless these are new funds this is the Governing Body raiding the local board coffers to pay for "pet projects". Each of these areas should be under the control of local boards, or at least local boards should have a veto on contributions on behalf of their communities. Note my comments regarding a community without heritage. Why should new residents of a virgin suburb contribute to efforts to preserve buildings or cultures markedly different to their own. I oppose regional funding in this manner unless it is new money voted specifically for regional projects under these headings. Local communities should have the flexibility to channel these funds where they do the most focused good in the future interests of the whole city. Let the North Shore concentrate on theatre and beach culture but build on the current ethnic and sporting successes of south Auckland. Cherish heritage houses by all means in Ponsonby, but let Waitakere residents concentrate on sustainable living.*
- *Being a northern Rodney resident means we are less likely to share in some of the Regionally organised activities. This needs to be taken into consideration when looking at allocation levels.*
- *How will this be distributed, a fair distribution needs to be made and not biased towards one group or interest*
- *Again provided there is balance. I have seen groups with a lot of power achieve excessive funds for their place in the community due to their skills and connections at the council. There should be balance and mentoring of groups that our communities need.*
- *There could be duplication between regional and local interest and require some checks to avoid this.*
- *I think one of the key things that needs to be kept track of with this fund is if it is reaching*

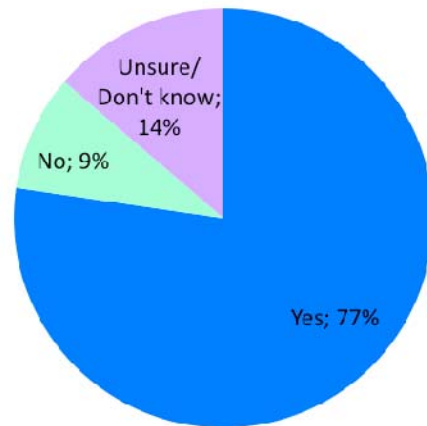
the grass roots- is this form of funding worth taking money from local groups, local funds. Especially for area's in the North were the Rodney area is almost half the land mass of this "region" though I'm sure they will get a comparatively small budget for community funding. They are a different type of community and need to be treated as such.

- *If an application is relevant to more than one fund can they apply to several funds at the same time? Who is it decided by and how is it decided how much each fund is granted each year?*
- *It looks like the neatest/tidiest way to approach this, in theory. What happens if a project crosses different areas? EG A cultural event such as a festival for young people that is designed to strengthen cultural ties across communities, and includes arts, sports and education about local environment?*
- *Should be have a coordinated approach among the region. Projects should be focus on where improvements / developments are needed and should be able to measure the outcome.*
- *It is the responsibility of parents, not the Council to ensure the wellbeing of children. I do not work hard in order to donate money so that other people's children can reap the benefits. Again, any initiative should be independent of age (the well-being of old people is important!).*
- *My conclusion is that regional funding is the way to go. You note 7 potential schemes. I strongly suggest that they be prioritised and not all be tackled at once. I remind you that property owners who pay the rates have calls on their financial resources beyond Auckland Council*
- *Need to be careful that the forums are not captured by strong local interest and rivalry ie put the \$\$ where the need is but recognise this will change - keep the focus on keeping rates low and more user-pays charges*

4.5 An outcome-based approach to community funding

Panellists were told that “Auckland Council inherited a large number of funding schemes from the former councils, many of which had similar outcomes and prescriptive criteria. These criteria ultimately created barriers for a number of community groups to access funding. We’ve created a new approach that removes much of the prescriptive criteria and places greater emphasis on the outcomes of the proposed activities. We believe this will result in easier processes for community groups, as well as improved outcomes for our communities.”

Do you agree that community funding should be provided on the outcomes a group delivers?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 824

Over three-quarters of panellists agreed that community funding should be provided based on the outcomes a group delivers.

From the comments associated with this question (displayed overleaf), around a third of people felt it was important to establish objective and clear assessment processes to measure the outcomes of a particular initiative and compare these to the plan. Some talked about a number of different evaluation methods, from surveys to independent commissioners – but many felt that it should not be based on self-assessment alone. Likewise, some felt it would be appropriate to drip-feed funding over time, as the group achieved certain milestones or outcomes – rather than provide all the funding up front.

Some people however pointed out the difficulties associated with measuring the outcomes associated with cultural and community type activities – and felt that sometimes these are hard to quantify and/or achieved only after a number of years. These people felt that some flexibility and common sense would need to be applied in assessing and measuring the outcomes and allocating the funding.

Any comments about the outcome-based funding approach suggested?	Number of responses n=298	% of responses
Outcome monitoring/ independent assessment required	94	32%
Some groups are difficult to measure/ circumstances change	44	15%
Outcome accountability -outcome must be achieved for funding to continue/ drip feed funds	41	14%
Outcome may not be able to be predicted before funding/ difficult for new requests	36	12%
Yes/ generally agree	32	11%
Consider how it benefits the community	27	9%
Outcome needs to be clear and quantifiable/measurable	27	9%
Consider some outcomes can take a long time to achieve	17	6%
Providing it is in line with the council's goals/budgets	17	6%
No/ generally disagree	13	4%
Advantages those groups who are good at 'form-filling'	7	2%
Resource-heavy or costly to administer	5	2%
Consider joint approach/ partnerships/ assistance	4	1%
Don't know/ don't understand question	17	6%
Other	13	4%

Selection of comments

- *I think outcomes could be assessed by interview with a percentage of those who have participated, as well as reported statistics. Survey forms don't always give a clear picture of effectiveness of programs*
- *A key part of any contract where funding is allocated to community groups and projects etc. must always have outcomes for delivery otherwise how would Council be able to gauge that funds have been utilized according to criteria etc. Also, depending on the amount of funding approved for a project/group, it would be a good idea to give funds before, during and after the project ends - not for small amounts but any upwards of \$5K up.*
- *Absolutely must be outcome based - but the outcome can be evaluated in many ways - clarity around this is important*
- *Accountability should include documentation, photographic evidence and allow for visits by Council staff.*
- *Agreed, and the claimed outcomes should be carefully monitored by council. It's not good enough to rely on what a group writes themselves about their outcomes in their accountability form, the claimed outcomes should be independently evaluated, especially for bigger grants.*
- *Some outcomes can be both good and unexpected (i.e. outcomes not anticipated in the application but still worthwhile). How will the policy accommodate this?*
- *Some very well meaning groups may fail in their goal but thru no fault of their own and have worked very hard. Other things can influence the outcome but a sensible board would be able to determine if the funding for some efforts was worthwhile*
- *Someone should monitor these outcomes. I have over the years seen fudging of figures when outcome self reporting is the norm.*
- *Sometime outcomes are not always going to be able to be measured or may have an outcome that occurs later on*
- *The best group at filling in the application is not necessarily the best group to receive the funding. There does need to be follow up and checking that what the group has said they*

will do is being done and is meeting the needs it was expected to meet.

- *There must be accountability for the use of the funds, however, not everything of value that a particular group or event provides to the community can be measured in concrete terms. Will there be allowance made for the intrinsic value?*

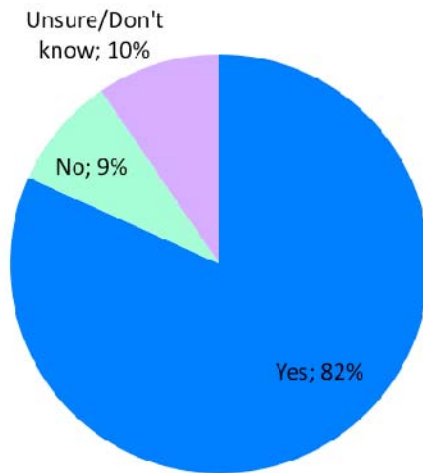
4.6 The assessment process

Panellists were told that “To be consistent in the way we allocate community funding across the region, we need to streamline the assessment processes. We’re proposing that all community funding applicants should provide:

- their legal status (depending upon the amount of funding requested);
- the purpose of their activity;
- their alignment to the relevant local board plan(s) and/or the Auckland Plan;
- the area(s) of benefit for the community;
- any other current sources of funding from other providers;
- any other documentation that may support their application.

If the applicant meets the above requirements for local, multi-board or regional funding, a staff member will assess each application to determine if the application is eligible for regional funding consideration. All proposals for community funding, regardless of the staff member’s recommendation to either accept or decline the application, will be forwarded to the relevant local board or the council’s governing body for their consideration.”

Do you agree with the proposed assessment process for all community funding applications?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 817

Eighty-two per cent of panellists agreed with the proposed assessment process.

As below, 220 people commented on this question, with around a quarter raising concerns about the ability of one council staff member to fairly and accurately assess community funding applications. Some felt that there might be potential for bias, and that the process should include more than one person and/or other checks and balances to ensure objectivity. Others felt it was important for the process to be straightforward, streamlined and transparent to avoid delays and over-complications.

Any comments about the proposed assessment process for all community funding applications?	Number of responses n=220	% of responses
Concerns about staff members' decision making/ knowledge/ should not be assessed by just one person	51	23%
Yes/ generally agree	34	15%
Keep it simple/ minimise red tape	27	12%
Accountability/ audit/ evidence of outcomes should be produced	26	12%
Ensure it is transparent	21	10%
Concern regarding spending of rate payers money/ general spending	13	6%
Assist groups in submission process	12	5%
Consider size of applicant, culture, working with community, coverage of more than one board	10	5%
Include experience/ track record of applicant	9	4%
No/ generally disagree	9	4%
Council provide feedback if applicants reapply/ review if turned down	6	3%
A long as there is a time limit	5	2%
Option to communicate directly with board/ vote on allocation	4	2%
Unsure/Don't know	5	2%
Other	12	5%

Selection of comments

- *Am wondering about the weight of the staff member's recommendation - they could be biased against certain groups. Good checks would need to be in place.*
- *Fine, except the staff member needs to be sure they are assessing each application for eligibility against the criteria, not subjectively. The wording "the staff member's recommendation to either accept or decline the application" does not help emphasise that.*
- *Having only one staff member assessing the applications is dictatorial and should be administered two to three qualified staff in application and approval for further consideration by the individual boards.*
- *I've not read the policy but presume it does specify that the staff member reviewing and making a recommendation on the application is not connected with the activity being proposed, nor are they a member of the relevant board which is to (possibly) provide the funding.*
- *It appears to be a process which is fair, and may give additional opportunity for funding*
- *It is clearly outlined, everyone knows what to expect.*
- *It is important that the application forms to be completed are not so complex that community event organisers are put off by complex questions full of Council Jargon.*
- *It is important that the application goes through various channels for assistance so that the limitations of individual perspective can be mitigated by wider understanding of the perceived outcomes if the proposal falls slightly outside prescriptive criteria*
- *One reservation - If the process has to consult too many groups and go through too many hoops it will take forever to get the funding approval. As witness by some planning decisions of recent years (eg Birkenhead Library and Highbury centre improvement). I think funding for*

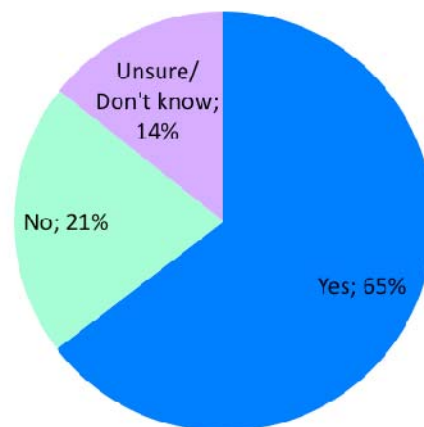
community funding has to take a quicker route.

- *Streamline YES but this seem to be a mixture of social funding and basic funding. There has to be checks and measures put in place to control funding but there should be a formula calculated to achieve equitable funding across the region to satisfy the needs of all communities*
- *The assessment process is reasonable but seems too open with the possibility of becoming a slush fund. To avoid this all allocations should be covered by the annual budgeting rounds.*
- *A group needs to be accountable for all allocation of funds as croneyism can soon deplete funds that could be used elsewhere more beneficially*
- *Anyone seeking funding should be required to produce evidence that they have raised an equivalent amount from other sources and that Council is not their only funding source.*
- *Yes but need to add whether they (keyworkers or management) are seeking funding elsewhere or if they are involved in another community organisation. You know how board members when seeking voting will also put in that they are representatives of other boards too. Providers need to be more transparent*
- *Yes streamline is good. The people seeking funding have great intentions and a good heart, but not all can fill out lots of paperwork and in reality they are better focussing their energies on the activity they are supporting.*

4.7 Funding rounds

Panellists were told that “An important part of streamlining our processes is to ensure we have consistent funding rounds across the region. We are proposing that there will be one round each year for both local and regional funding applications (staggered throughout the year for regional funding) with the exception of the Strengthening Communities Fund, which would have two rounds each year”

Do you agree with the proposed funding rounds for both local and regional funding applications?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 811

Just over two-thirds of panellists agreed with the proposed process, while one in five disagreed and 14% were not sure.

While the majority agreed with this process, from the comments received a number of people felt that one funding round per year was insufficient, and would not meet the needs of the community groups applying for funding. Specifically, some felt that community groups may not be able to wait a whole year and/or that certain circumstances or situations may arise during the year. Some thought there should be two or more rounds per year and others felt that the process should allow some flexibility to account for unforeseen circumstances.

Conversely, other panellists could see the merit in having only one funding round per year.

Several people felt that there should be consistency between the different community funds and that the Strengthening Communities fund should be treated differently.

Any comments about the proposed funding rounds?	Number of responses n=254	% of responses
Should have more than one round - should be two rounds for all / quarterly	98	39%
Less structure more flexibility/ allow fast track process / exceptions	40	16%
Yes/ generally agree	26	10%
Same funding for all/ Strengthening Communities should be the same	21	8%
Concerns about funding procedure in general	15	6%
Advertise funding rounds and cut-off dates in advance	14	6%
One round for all	13	5%
As long as benefits applicant/ stays on budget	10	4%
No/ generally disagree	9	4%
Strengthening Communities shouldn't be council responsibility/ should be redefined	6	2%
Question doesn't match policy (states 3 rounds per yr)	3	1%
Don't know	17	7%
Other	12	5%

Selection of comments

- *Those figures should be doubled at least. In many cases application for funding is dependent on a specific project and having to wait months for a reply is unrealistic, as this delays applying to other sources of funding.*
- *A good idea could wait up to a whole year to be funded. This suits the council but not the community. I am 100 % against this idea. Sure there are issues with budgets etc and funding allocations but the process is not in tune with the communities needs at all.*
- *A full year is a long time for small organisations to wait/fit in. NB Small community organisations are usually run by unpaid volunteers who may be elected annually and have considerable loss of "institutional knowledge" about funding available and how/when to do it. They should not be disadvantaged especially as high turnover often indicates a healthy organisation with lots of active participation. It would be really good if Council were to send out 'reminder' notices and information (with plenty of lead time) to all known organisations about upcoming funding rounds at least bi-annually*
- *Needs an 'exception' clause that would allow for unexpected requests*
- *Annual funding is too hard for small groups and small grants, and very limiting on the kinds of things that could be funded. By the time an annual cycle is completed, it would be well into next year, and by then the people involved could be different (new committees elected and so on). I think there should be a quarterly cycle for small grants, and an annual cycle for*

longer term service contracts.

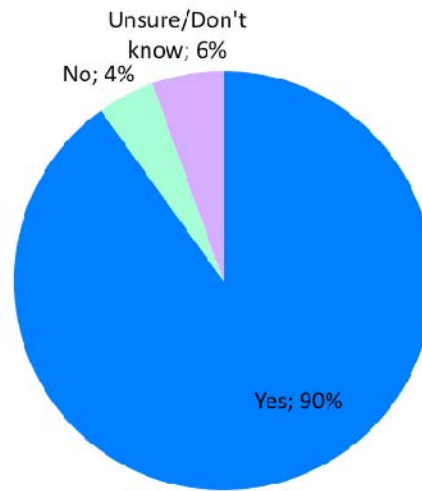
- *New ideas and opportunities come up throughout the year. A year is a long time to wait if you have just missed the round. I think you should have 2 rounds each year*
- *But I also note and underline as essential the opportunity to respond to situations that may arise that do not meet these criteria. This is clearly stated in the draft plan.*
- *Can't see anything in the proposal that makes sense of having one round of funding for everything except the Strengthening Communities Fund. What's so different about the Strengthening Communities Fund? Why not the Culture and Arts Fund? Or any of the others? I think you should have two rounds a year for all the funds. One round a year isn't sufficient - it dampens creativity and enterprise, and can also mean a community misses out on something that could be provided.*
- *Its rare that one can plan so far ahead. there should be two rounds for regional funding. This is not what your documents say. They talk of three times a year for local and multi-board decisions.*
- *Local funding, regardless of type, should have two rounds per year, otherwise the process will stagnate. Another option is to have 'open' funding for projects under a certain dollar value, subject to a finite accrued total, but yearly funding rounds for larger projects*
- *Focusing the funding round is a good idea, anyone who misses that deadline can work up their plan for the next year.*
- *I think this will help manage the budget better.*
- *Keep funding rounds to a minimum to reduce administration expenses.*
- *It will give communities a chance to prepare what they think is needed for the next year and sort out their priorities.*
- *Having one round could result in a huge number of applications made at one time. Will the decision-making bodies have capacity to consider all applications in a timely manner or will the sheer volume of applications result in delays? Having just one round could result in some weak applications that are not necessarily well thought out, submitted just to get the funding while it's available and avoid the wait until the next year's funding round i.e. requests for funding without strong reasons, in anticipation of needing it later in the year. Perhaps by having more than one round per year, applicants will wait until their ideas are well thought out before applying for funding.*
- *I don't understand why the strengthening communities fund needs 2 rounds?*

4.8 Accountability measures

Panellists were told that “Because community funding is funded through ratepayers’ money, we want to be sure that community funding recipients and our elected representatives (councillors and local board members), who allocate funding to community groups, are accountable for the decisions they make. We’re suggesting that all community funding recipients have an agreement with Auckland Council that outlines the terms and conditions of the approved grant or multi-year funding contract. The agreement would outline:

- the purpose and condition of the grant or multi-year funding contract;
- the accountability requirements, which would include future reporting obligations and deadlines.

Do you agree with the proposed accountability measures for community funding recipients?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 816

The proposed accountability measures were very widely supported, with 90% of respondents agreeing.

When asked to comment, a large number of respondents reaffirmed their support, and said that accountability was paramount when it came to spending ratepayer money. Many people felt that the council should apply strict accountability measures and monitor a groups outcomes and activities against expectations.

Some felt that the accountability requirements needed to be clear and simple to allow for that fact that community groups are often run by volunteers with little time or resources at their disposal.

Any comments about the proposed accountability measures?	Number of responses n=229	% of responses
Agree accountability is important/ provide evidence of achievement	138	60%
Keep simple/ minimise red tape	41	18%
Yes/ generally agree	19	8%
Less funding generally/ concern regarding spending of rate payers money	10	4%
Outcomes difficult to measure	7	3%
Don't agree with multi-year funding	6	3%
No/ generally disagree	3	1%
Other	15	7%

Selection of comments

- *Absolutely. If people do not use the money in the way they promised and produce useful results then they should not get more year after year.*
- *Absolutely...poorly planned community initiatives that benefit no one should be held to account*
- *Accountability - transparent & clear - is imperative when spending ratepayers money.*
- *Accountability is a critical factor in accepting funding, and it keeps organisations on their toes to make sure they meet the promises they made in an application*
- *I feel that any funding should benefit the community at large and should not provide a benefit for only a small number of people with a vested interest in the particular project that they are promoting. There should be tangible evidence that the project being supported is producing the intended result prior to any further funding.*
- *I think although the local representative can make the decision, it needs to be peer reviewed from head councillors. Like a sanity check. We don't want to see someone get funding over the line and repeat this every year if there is also no review or benchmarking or measurement that the local community is actually any longer benefiting from the initiative.*
- *I think it would be money well spent to meet with the groups in person and actually see what they have spent their money on. Don't make it an accounting exercise. Get out in the community and visit the groups.*
- *I think the accountability should be rigorous.*
- *The policy does not state what steps council will take to ensure that groups have adhered to their funding agreement and that the promised outcomes have been delivered. Will groups be visited by a council officer?*
- *There has to be strong accountability re use of grants/contracts to ensure ratepayer funds are simply not being wasted. Outcomes to be documented to Council detailing where the grants have actually gone.*
- *There must be reporting requirements, and there must be 100% auditing of the application of funding (did they spend it on what they said they would), of the performance of the proposed activities (did they do what they said they would), and of the outcomes delivered (did it result in the outcomes proposed). Ratepayers are entitled to know that their money is spent wisely and legitimately.*
- *I think it would sometimes be hard to show results - for instance suppose you did what I suggest and brought together and funded the environmental groups urging all to take climate change matters seriously, how would you measure how well they were getting the message across? Some might attack the idea and say it is political.*
- *Regarding accountability reporting. I have been involved in community groups where the accountability reporting is extremely cumbersome, requires an extraordinary amount of time to comply and is then often not exactly what was wanted because the instructions are not clear. It needs to be recognised that a lot of groups requesting funding are run by volunteers who actually have day jobs, families to look after and who already put in many voluntary hours. The accountability requirements should be clearly and SIMPLY stated, and if any group needs assistance or advice in completing their accountability reporting there should be someone available in the local boards to help.*
- *Reporting should be limited to key information that is important. Currently there is too much reporting requested for the sake of reporting.*
- *The reporting requirements should not be so burdensome as to stifle useful volunteer activity but not so lax as to permit careless application of money.*

5 How were the results used?

The People's Panel findings, together with other feedback from the public, showed considerable support for the different features of the proposed funding policy. However other consultation showed that the process and timing to deliver the policy was generally unsupported. Stakeholders felt the development of the policy was rushed and that the policies did not take into account the views of community groups. The community funding policy will be amended to address these issues, and will be adopted prior to the start of the 2013 / 2014 financial year

Appendix I Questionnaire with tables:

Q2A: Do you agree with these exclusions?	Number of responses n=895	% of responses
Yes	717	80%
No	102	11%
Unsure/Don't know	76	8%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 895

Q2B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=289	
Open text		

Q3A: Do you support local funding being aligned to the priorities of local board plans?	Number of responses n=860	% of responses
Yes	720	84%
No	81	9%
Unsure/Don't know	59	7%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 860

Q3B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=283	
Open text		

Q4A: Do you support the proposed approach for community funding applications that benefit multiple local board areas?	Number of responses n=843	% of responses
Yes	668	79%
No	80	9%
Unsure/Don't know	95	11%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 843

Q4B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=213	
Open text		

Q5A: Do support aligning regional funding to the priorities and outcomes of the Auckland Plan as suggested?	Number of responses n=829	% of responses
Yes	640	77%
No	103	12%
Unsure/Don't know	86	10%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 829

Q5B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=259	
Open text		

Q6A: Do you agree that community funding should be provided on the outcomes a group delivers?	Number of responses n=824	% of responses
Yes	637	77%
No	74	9%
Unsure/Don't know	113	14%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 824

Q6B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=298	
Open text		

Q7A: Do you agree with the proposed assessment process for all community funding applications?	Number of responses n=817	% of responses
Yes	668	82%
No	71	9%
Unsure/Don't know	78	10%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 817

Q7B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=220	
Open text		

Q8A: Do you agree with the proposed funding rounds for both local and regional funding applications?	Number of responses n=811	% of responses
Yes	524	65%
No	171	21%
Unsure/Don't know	116	14%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 811

Q8B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=254	
Open text		

Q9A: Do you agree with the proposed accountability measures for community funding recipients?	Number of responses n=816	% of responses
Yes	735	90%
No	36	4%
Unsure/Don't know	45	6%

Base: Panellists participating in survey n= 816

Q9B: Any comments?	Number of responses n=229	
Open text		

Appendix II Respondent profile

	All respondents n=911	Percentages (%) n=911	Statistics NZ Percentages (%) 2006 census data
Gender			
Female	438	48%	51%
Male	463	51%	49%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	10	1%	
Age			
15-24 years	15	2%	20%
25-34 years	77	8%	19%
35-44 years	160	18%	21%
45-54 years	178	20%	17%
55-64 years	231	25%	12%
65-74 years	187	21%	7%
75+ years	51	6%	6%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	12	1%	
Ethnicity (Multiple response)			
European	771	85%	55%
Maori	48	5%	11%
Pacific Peoples	15	2%	15%
Asian	56	6%	18%
Middle Eastern, Latin American, African	13	1%	1%
Other	0	0%	8%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	54	6%	
Local Board			
Albert-Eden	59	6%	7%
Devonport-Takapuna	22	2%	4%
Franklin	37	4%	4%
Great Barrier	2	0.2%	0.1%
Henderson-Massey	39	4%	8%
Hibiscus and Bays	66	7%	6%
Howick	32	4%	9%
Kaipatiki	34	4%	6%
Mangere-Otahuhu	16	2%	5%
Manurewa	9	1%	6%
Maungakiekie-Tamaki	26	3%	5%
Orakei	63	7%	6%
Otara-Papatoetoe	7	1%	6%
Papakura	18	2%	3%
Puketapapa	13	1%	4%
Rodney	52	6%	4%
Upper Harbour	16	2%	3%
Waiheke	4	0.4%	1%
Waitakere Ranges	34	4%	3%
Waitemata	76	8%	5%
Whau	35	4%	5%
Other/Prefer not to say/Unknown	250	27%	-

Demographics from People's Panel registration information