

# WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PILOT EVALUATION

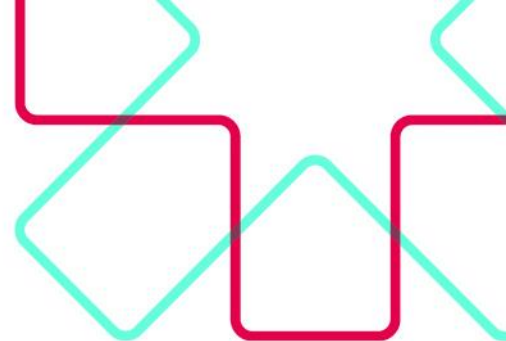
## Interim Report

Interim evaluation findings for the period July 2017 - June 2018

September 2018







# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
About Welcoming Communities	1
About the evaluation	1
Purpose of this report	1
Report structure	1
Methodology	2
Welcoming Communities pilot survey	2
Interviews and visits to pilot sites	3
<b>Summary of progress</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview of Programme development</b>	<b>5</b>
Welcoming Communities pilot establishment phase	7
Appointment of the Welcoming Communities Coordinators	7
Findings	7
Establishing Advisory and Governance Groups	9
Findings	10
Welcoming Plan development phase	12
Welcoming Communities stocktake	12
Findings	13
Developing a Welcoming Plan	15
Findings	17
Resourcing and programme support	22
Findings	22
<b>Early outcomes at the pilot sites</b>	<b>25</b>
Findings	25
<b>Initial lessons from the pilot sites</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Next steps for the Welcoming Communities pilot</b>	<b>30</b>
Timeline of the evaluation - 2019	31



# APPENDICES

**Appendix 1 : The Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand**

**32**



# PREFACE

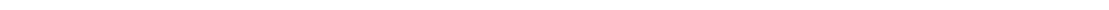
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# INTRODUCTION

## About Welcoming Communities

The Welcoming Communities programme supports and encourages Councils and their communities to take a greater role in ensuring newcomers are welcomed into the local community. In addition to coordinating support and resources to assist newcomers, Welcoming Communities actively mobilises and includes local residents in welcoming activities: an approach which helps to create strong relationships between newcomers and their new community.

The Welcoming Communities New Zealand pilot draws on the learnings of similar welcoming initiatives – such as Welcoming Cities (Australia), Welcoming America (USA), Intercultural Cities (Europe), and Cities of Migration (Canada). Among the core principles of the New Zealand pilot are the cultural values of *Whānaungatanga* – the importance of relationships and a sense of belonging and support, and *Manaakitanga* – the value of extending hospitality and caring for others. Funding for the pilot programme was secured through the Accrued Migrant Levy Revenue, and approved in June 2017.

## About the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the development, implementation, and early outcomes of the Welcoming Communities pilots. The programme is a two-year pilot, running from July 2017 to June 2019, at five sites across New Zealand.

The scope of the evaluation is the five sites (consisting of 9 Councils) which are piloting the programme. The evaluation will provide Immigration New Zealand with empirical evidence to inform their reporting to Ministers, including decisions about the ongoing delivery of the Welcoming Communities programme.

## Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide Immigration New Zealand with interim feedback on the early implementation and outcomes of the Welcoming Communities pilots. The report is intended to provide Immigration New Zealand with a summary of the progress made to date, and lessons learned which may inform the wider roll-out of Welcoming Communities in New Zealand.

## Report structure

This report covers:

- 1 Welcoming Communities establishment phase
  - a Welcoming Communities Coordinator appointment
  - b Advisory and Governance Group establishment



- 2 Welcoming Communities development phase
  - a Stocktake of Council and community policies, programmes and activities
  - b Welcoming Plan development
  - c Programme resourcing and support
- 3 Early outcomes at the pilot sites
- 4 Initial lessons from the pilot sites

## Methodology

The evaluation uses a combination of online surveying and qualitative interviews (conducted either during site visits, or via telephone). These methods ensured that a wide range of stakeholder perspectives were gathered.

### Welcoming Communities pilot survey

The survey was co-designed by Immigration New Zealand and MartinJenkins. The survey was deployed online to a wide range of stakeholders at the pilot sites, identified by the Welcoming Communities Coordinators.

Given the current stage of the pilot (one year into the two year pilot), the survey primarily focused on the advisory arrangements, the stocktake, and the development of the Welcoming Plan to date. Respondents were also asked questions regarding the resourcing of their pilot sites the support the pilot has received (either from their Council or from central government), and any early outcomes they were seeing in their communities as a result of Welcoming Communities.

A total of 52 responses were received, from a distribution of 108 individuals (a response rate of 48 percent). Table 1 lists the range of perspectives received.

**Table 1: Welcoming Communities survey respondents**

Role	Number of responses
Advisory/Governance Group member	19
Council staff	12
Councillor	6
Community group member	5
Programme Coordinator	4
Government agency	3
Non-government organisation	2
Māori representative	1

Source: MartinJenkins' Welcoming Communities survey





## Interviews and visits to pilot sites

During July and August 2018, a series of site visits and telephone interviews were conducted with the pilot sites. Interviews were also conducted with staff from Immigration New Zealand, and the Office of Ethnic Communities.

The interviews explored, in greater detail, the topics introduced in the pilot survey.

A total of 46 interviews were conducted. Due to timing constraints, visits were not able to be conducted at the Whanganui, Selwyn, or Ashburton sites – telephone interviews were undertaken with stakeholders from each of these sites. Table 2 lists the range of participants who were interviewed.

**Table 2: Welcoming Communities stakeholder interviews**

Role	Site	Number of interviews
Central government staff	Immigration New Zealand, Office of Ethnic Communities	7
Community stakeholders	All sites	10
Welcoming Communities coordinators	All sites	6
Mayors	Ashburton, Tauranga, Western Bay of Plenty, Palmerston North	4
Councillors	Southland, Tauranga, Whanganui	4
Council staff	Southland, Palmerston North, Tauranga, Whanganui	15

Source: MartinJenkins

The report contains a broad range of quotes which exemplify the findings of the evaluation. In order to avoid identifying any individual respondents, the quotes have not included a citation of the respondents' role or site.



# SUMMARY OF PROGRESS



# OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

The Welcoming Communities pilot began in earnest in July 2017, with the commencement of the programme's establishment phase. During this phase the pilot Councils undertook a considerable volume of work, laying the groundwork for the successful development of their Welcoming Plans.

The establishment phase concluded in December 2017, during which time the Councils, supported by Immigration New Zealand, undertook key actions including:

## Co-designing the Standard

- The Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand (Appendix 1) is a benchmark of the attributes which show a community to be welcoming. It serves as the basis for Councils to become accredited as a "Welcoming Community". The pilot Councils co-designed the Standard with Immigration New Zealand. Following a period of community engagement and public feedback, the Standard was published in December 2017.

## Developing the evaluation framework

- Pilot Councils and central government provided considerable guidance and input into the development of the Welcoming Communities evaluation framework, which was finalised in June 2017.

## Recruiting programme Coordinators

- The Coordinators have project management responsibility for the pilot and an overview of the full programme of work, including facilitating the delivery of some Welcoming Plan activities.

## Promoting Welcoming Communities to the community

- During the establishment phase, Councils and Coordinators have begun to promote and socialise Welcoming Communities within their local community. This includes engaging with tangata whenua and various stakeholder groups and developing project management and communication plans.



Following the completion of the establishment phase, Councils progressed into the Welcoming Plan development phase of the pilot. The development phase ran from January to July 2018. During this time the Councils, supported by Immigration New Zealand, undertook key actions including:

Embedding governance and advisory arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councils and Coordinators successfully appointed members to their Advisory Groups and Governance Groups (note: not all programmes have separate governance arrangements).</li> </ul>
Conducting the stocktake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coordinators led a stocktake of existing Council and community policies, programmes and activities, in particular those related to newcomers. The stocktake produced an inventory of existing areas of work, and successfully identified areas in which there were gaps or opportunities to deliver new or better activities and services.</li> </ul>
Drafting the Welcoming Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coordinators led the drafting of their Council's Welcoming Plans. The Plans were derived from the evidence gathered during the stocktake exercise, and contain a comprehensive list of welcoming activities, which are pegged against the 8 elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard.</li> </ul>
Arranging sign-off/endorsement for the Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coordinators have sought sign-off or endorsement by their respective Councils. Three of the Welcoming Plans have been launched to date, and formal launches for the remaining three plans are scheduled for later in 2018 or early 2019.</li> </ul>
Implementing and monitoring Plan activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coordinators have benchmarked their activities against the Standard. As part of this process, the Coordinators are tracking and monitoring the progress of their activities and are reporting back to their Advisory Groups, Council staff, Councillors, and Mayors.</li> </ul>
Engaging and liaising with Immigration New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coordinators continue to liaise with Immigration New Zealand as their Plans enter the implementation stage. A key aspect of this engagement is the co-design of the accreditation process - the basis of which are the outcomes attached to each element of the Standard.</li> </ul>



# Welcoming Communities pilot establishment phase

## Appointment of the Welcoming Communities Coordinators

The Welcoming Communities Coordinator is the most visible role at each pilot site. The Coordinators were tasked with coordinating the development of the Welcoming Plan, and they now support the implementation and delivery of the welcoming activities outlined in the plan. Some activities are council-led; some are a collaboration between Councils and community partners; others are led by community stakeholders. The Coordinators champion the promotion of the pilot in their communities, building community participation and fostering relationships to help lead and deliver the welcoming activities: the Coordinator serves as a “driver, connector, and advisor” within the pilot, brokering and facilitating relationships within the community. The Coordinators are the conduit between the pilot site and central government.

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**“The Coordinators are a major driver in the successful development of the Welcoming Communities programme.”**

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## Findings

- **Appointing a person with the right skills and competencies as a Coordinator is essential**

Each of the stakeholder interviews emphasised how vital the appointment of the Coordinator position is. The Coordinators share a common set of skills and competencies, which can be summarised as:

- a dedication to ensuring the success of the pilot, and a concern for the wellbeing of newcomers
- adept at building and maintaining relationships (both within Council, and within the wider community)
- extensive community development expertise
- excellent communication skills
- excellent project management capability.

Alongside this, all pilot sites employed someone from outside the Council as the Coordinator, helping to bring a fresh set of views to the pilot.

<sup>1</sup> Ashburton District's Welcoming Plan, p3



*"[Our Coordinator] has been incredible, she has made a big difference. She has been able to get out there into the community and form connections and links between groups, to a greater level than the Council has had previously".*

It was noted during the interviews that the Coordinators bring different levels of skills and competencies to the role, such as project management capability. As such, it has been important for Council staff and community stakeholders to work with and support the Coordinators, to bolster these competencies.

*"It is critical that Coordinators have strategic project management expertise, to manage this pilot well".*

*"Keeping the community impetus going is perhaps the hardest job of the Coordinators; they have to navigate so many competing priorities, within the community but within the Council as well".*

- **The responsibility for programme delivery is not dependent on one person**

A number of interviewees stated that, with the appointment of their Coordinator, many Council staff members and community stakeholders held the impression that their responsibilities would shift to the Coordinator.

*"Our Advisory Group and internal [Council] staff have had to be very clear to the community – and to the rest of Council – that our Coordinator will not be doing everything".*

While it is important to appoint a person with the required skills and competencies to the Coordinator role, the pilot sites as a collective (Coordinators, Council staff, and community stakeholders) have worked hard to reinforce the fact that the delivery of the pilot is *not* the sole responsibility of the Coordinators.

The initial engagement with community stakeholders did not make fully clear that they would have a delivery role, in addition to providing ideas for activities and promoting the pilot more generally. This point has since been clarified across the sites.

*"Any perception that the Coordinator is going to be doing everything is completely wrong, and needs to be headed off very early on".*

- **Coordinators need to avoid front-loading the work programme**

The Coordinators, and the Councils more broadly, are enthusiastic about the potential of Welcoming Communities. Across the sites this enthusiasm has led to an immense amount of work being front-loaded into the Welcoming Communities work programme. In part this has also been driven by Councils and Coordinators' desire to demonstrate to external audiences how much has been achieved by their pilot. This has presented a particular challenge for Coordinators who are on part-time contracts.

*"We have spoken with our Coordinator and said "right, let's not try to do all of this in three months". Some of these things are longer-term, some things can be done later – we don't need to do everything now".*

Advisory Groups have played an essential role in helping Coordinators to take a longer-term view of the pilot, and to space out their work programme to avoid early burn-out.



*“The Advisory Group have been wonderful as a sounding board. They have helped us to spread out some of our work, and have really helped me as the Coordinator”.*

- **It is important for the Coordinators to communicate with each other**

The Coordinators acknowledge that their role can be isolating, due to being the only dedicated Welcoming Communities staff member at each site. The isolation is reinforced by the geographic spread of the pilot sites. To counter this, for their individual wellbeing as well as the sustainability of the pilot, it has been important for the Coordinators to remain in regular contact with each other. This has been achieved through a regular monthly teleconference between the Coordinators, and through face-to-face sessions held in Wellington. The Coordinators remain in regular informal contact with one-another - exchanging ideas for welcoming activities and discussing the progress of the pilot more generally.

*“This is a very isolated role. Without being able to talk with the other Coordinators regularly, I think I would have struggled”.*

## Establishing Advisory and Governance Groups

A vital component of the Welcoming Communities pilots are the Governance and Advisory Groups.

Governance Groups have been established for sites with more than one Council, for example the combined Ashburton District and Selwyn District Governance Group. This group consists of the Mayors, chief executive officers, and senior staff of the participating Councils. The principal role of this Governance Group is to act as advocate and champion of the pilot. In the case of the Tactical Group overseeing the Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty pilot site, their role focuses on the effective implementation of Welcoming Communities and the Welcoming Plan, through the evaluation of outcomes and assessing the ongoing needs of the community.

Advisory Groups have been assembled for each pilot site, and generally have a more operational and substantive role than Governance Groups. Advisory Group members reflect a cross-section of community stakeholders who are actively involved in promoting and advocating for the wellbeing of newcomers.

As an example of Advisory Group membership, the Palmerston North Welcoming Communities Advisory Group is comprised of representatives from<sup>2</sup>:

- Central Economic Development Agency
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Department of Internal Affairs
- English Language Partners
- Manawatū Chamber of Commerce
- Manawatū Multicultural Council (including the Manawatū Newcomers Network)

<sup>2</sup> Palmerston North Welcoming Plan



- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Red Cross
- Immigration New Zealand
- Network of Skilled Migrants Manawatū.

The Advisory Group members contribute to the implementation of Welcoming Communities by providing support and advice to the Coordinator, and to Council leadership when required. The Advisory Group members bring with them considerable local networks and relationships, which they draw upon to help shape the pilot and ensure it is tailored to the needs of their local community. The networks brought by the Advisory Group members were viewed as central to the success of the stocktake exercise across all of the pilot sites. The Advisory Group members bring particular subject-matter expertise, including cultural advice on engaging with newcomers, business and economic advice, and advice on engaging with local iwi.

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**“We have a fantastic Advisory Group. They have been fundamental in helping to develop and spread word of the plan - without them we would not be in the great position we are”.**

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## Findings

Council staff and Welcoming Communities Coordinators were surveyed for their views on the quality of their advisory and governance arrangements. Overall, the majority of respondents ( $n=10/14$ ) agreed that their pilot had robust advisory and governance arrangements in place.

The pilot site interviews emphasised the importance of how Advisory Groups are assembled. Notably:

- **The importance of a representative range of members**

Each pilot site emphasised the need to have a broad, diverse membership on the Advisory Group. This not only includes cultural and ethnic diversity, but also diversity of background – such as business and economic perspectives, international student perspectives, and central government perspectives. These varying points of view have contributed to the development and shaping of high-quality Welcoming Plans.

*“Our Plan was initially very detail-heavy. The Advisory Group pushed back on this and helped us to see the merit in a more streamlined plan, with the outcomes-based detail to be included in a separate implementation document”.*

*“You need the range of people – the right councillors, the right Council staff, the right community membership – otherwise the relationships just won’t form”.*

- **The importance of Advisory Group membership**





While it is important to have a diverse range of perspectives on the Advisory Group, it is equally important to ensure that appropriate people are nominated to give these perspectives. Pilot site stakeholders repeatedly stated that the Advisory Groups required members who have extensive experience in working with newcomers and recent migrants, such as in a housing and social development context, or through local cultural groups and organisations. The majority of interviewees have praised the Coordinators for the effort that was taken in identifying and nominating individuals for a position on the Advisory Group.

*"[The Coordinator] has done an absolutely outstanding job of putting the [Advisory] Group together. There are a great range of people on it – obviously you can't have everyone on it – but the one's we have are those who have genuinely worked with migrants for years, helping them to settle. They have done the hard yards and not just talked the talk, so they know what they are doing".*

- **The importance of iwi representation**

As outlined in the Welcoming Communities Standard, the role of tangata whenua is central to the development and delivery of welcoming activities<sup>3</sup>. Despite the centrality of their role, iwi representation is lacking across most of the Advisory Groups.

*"Iwi representation is missing on our Group, and it is really needed".*

*"The members of the Group are great, but very busy. This has been a main reason we have not had much engagement with iwi – they are too busy".*

*"We have an excellent Group with a diverse range of backgrounds – we need iwi involvement, though".*

The area of iwi engagement will be covered further in the *Developing a Welcoming Plan* section of this report.

<sup>3</sup> Welcoming Communities Standard, Principle 2



## Welcoming Plan development phase

### Welcoming Communities stocktake

The stocktake forms the foundation of a Welcoming Plan. The stocktake is a comprehensive assessment of “current policies, services, programmes and activities”, primarily those which relate to settlement and cultural diversity. However, the stocktake also focused more broadly – for example, on Council policies relating to recruitment and communication.

The stocktake also provides a gap analysis, which identifies areas in which policies, programmes, and activities are either missing, or not delivered in a welcoming and inclusive manner. The stocktake enables the Council to benchmark themselves against the 8 outcome areas of the Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand. It also identifies and showcases good settlement work already underway.

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“The stocktake showed that there are a lot of wonderful things happening out there [in the community] already”.

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### Pilot site stocktakes

Each of the pilot sites adopted slightly varied approaches to conducting their stocktake; however the range of methods used was broadly similar. These methods included:

- one-on-one interviews
- semi-structured group discussions
- workshops
- desktop policy review
- analysis of existing Council data
- surveys (Council staff, newcomers and locals).

The pilot sites engaged with a diverse range of stakeholders, including key community members working with newcomers. These stakeholders included:

- key Council staff
- multicultural councils
- skilled migrant networks
- Chambers of Commerce

<sup>4</sup> Putting out the Welcome Mat, p.5



- New Zealand Red Cross
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Education providers (including tertiary providers, and English language providers)
- Community organisations (including churches, choirs, sports groups, and women's networks).

## Findings

Pilot site stakeholders were surveyed for their views on the helpfulness of the stocktake process to assessing the local needs and priorities of their community. The majority of respondents ( $n=26/33$ ) found the stocktake to be a helpful exercise.

All of the sites noted the strong buy-in which they had received from their local communities for the stocktake, and the programme in general. The pilot site visits and interviews further highlighted the critical role of the stocktake. Notably:

- **The stocktakes highlighted the volume of activities already underway in the community**

Each of the pilot sites reported being surprised at the number of groups and activities underway in their community, which were not on the Council's radar.

*"Just realising how many activities we already had was great".*

Prior to the stocktake, the community development / engagement teams within Councils felt they had a solid understanding of the cultural groups in their communities, including sporting, language and religious groups. The interviews with pilot sites emphasised that awareness of groups and activities was primarily restricted to larger regional events, and larger, more prominent groups in the region. The stocktake helped Councils to realise the degree of smaller-scale activities taking place in their communities.

*"The extent of relevant activities already underway in the community was a real surprise".*

- **The stocktakes successfully identified gaps**

Most respondents ( $n=17/33$ ) agreed that the stocktake process had identified valuable information, namely gaps in service provision.

*"Through the stocktake, we found out our strengths and weaknesses".*

*"The [stocktake] process easily showed us some of the gaps".*

"Gaps" were defined in a variety of ways across the pilot sites. In general, they were seen as ways in which Councils can more overtly demonstrate being welcoming of diversity, such as multi-lingual street signs, and highlighting ethnic diversity in promotional material and publicly-displayed photographs.

A commonly-identified gap across the pilot sites was the need to encourage greater cultural diversity among elected officials, and leadership roles in the community more generally.

*"There is currently little cultural diversity in leadership roles in our region, and the voices of migrant communities are not being heard in local discussions and forums".*



- **The stocktakes emphasised the need to coordinate the services offered to newcomers**

The stocktake was helpful in identifying areas of duplication, in which multiple community groups (or areas of Council) were delivering the same or similar services and information.

*“Coordination – not only between newcomers and Council, but also newcomers and other groups – is generally poor”.*

*“Services for newcomers are uncoordinated, there is no one single point of accessing information, or a coordinated approach to accessing it”.*

Additionally, the stocktakes have given Councils an opportunity to help community groups coordinate and schedule their own events. A number of instances were cited of multiple events happening on the same day, due to a lack of coordination. This resulted in smaller turnout at each event than would have been achieved had the events been scheduled on separate days. Councils are now working to address these scheduling issues, thanks to the stocktake affording them greater knowledge of the activities and events underway in their regions.

- **The stocktakes functioned as an effective engagement tool**

In addition to providing an inventory of activities and services in their communities, the stocktakes also served as a valuable tool for engaging with groups in the community. For some groups it was their first official engagement with the Council.

*“The stocktake has been absolutely key in building great relationships”.*

The stocktake process gave ethnic groups, newcomer groups, local residents, and groups providing settlement services the chance to start new conversations with their Council, beyond the services and activities currently being provided.

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**“One of the cool things we found out through the stocktake is that one of the community centres had done research into cultural groups in their area. They found out why certain groups weren't using the area, and they are now making it more welcoming - multi-language signage, cultural artwork on the walls - and that has purely come from the community”.**

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## Developing a Welcoming Plan

A Welcoming Plan represents the blueprint for developing a community which is welcoming to newcomers involving local residents in welcoming activities. The plan is heavily informed by the stocktake, and contains a range of elements, including:

- a range of welcoming activities under each element of the Standard
- the audience for each activity (including the objectives, and who will lead each activity)
- identifying new ways for locals to support newcomers
- highlighting existing welcoming activities already underway.

## Examples of welcoming activities in Welcoming Plans

Each Welcoming Plan contains a broad range of welcoming activities, nested under each of the 8 elements of the Welcoming Communities Standard. Welcoming activities can be led by the Council, led by a community stakeholder, or by a collaboration of both.

Selected examples of welcoming activities are listed in Table 3.

**Table 3: Examples of Welcoming Activities**

Example 1: Inclusive Leadership (Ashburton District Welcoming Plan)			
Activity	Key actions	Timeframes	Lead roles
Explore feasibility of preparing guidance to assist community organisations to actively engage with and provide opportunities for Māori involvement in welcoming activities.	Form an action team led by Te Rūnaka o Arowhenua and where appropriate with the Hakatere Marae Committee, to explore the feasibility of preparing community guidance. Prepare community guidance and implement subject to secured funding and resourcing.	Exploratory phase completed by December 2018. Subject to funding and resource needs, guidance to be developed from February 2019, promoted and implemented from June 2019.	Te Rūnaka o Arowhenua Welcoming Communities Programme Coordinator
Example 2: Connected and Inclusive Communities (Whanganui District Welcoming Plan)			
Activity	Key actions	Timeframes	Lead roles
The receiving community is well-equipped and supported to welcome and interact with newcomers.	Investigate the suitability of a community-led buddy system and implement if viable.	Year 2	Community groups
	Work with community groups to identify and implement ways to improve coordination and connections between the Council and community groups.	Ongoing	Welcoming Community stakeholders



	Invite locals to suggest ways to be involved in welcoming activities.	Ongoing	Culture and Community Team (Whanganui District Council) Community groups
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#### Example 3: Welcoming Communications (Southland Region Welcoming Plan)

Activity	Key actions	Timeframes	Who is involved
The community is well-informed about the local benefits of immigration and the Welcoming Communities programme, including success stories.	Conduct an ongoing informative communications campaign to promote the principles of the programme to the receiving community.	Year 1	All 4 Councils, Southland Economic Development Agency/Venture Southland, Advisory Group
	Develop and implement a comprehensive regional approach to providing timely and useful information to newcomers.	Year 1	All 4 Councils, Southland Economic Development Agency /Venture Southland, Advisory Group
	Utilise i-Sites and information centres as physical 'central welcoming hubs' and places for both the local community and newcomers to access welcoming information.	Year 1	Southland Economic Development Agency /Venture Southland
	Investigate how consistently brand and label 'Welcoming Communities' initiatives in Southland	Year 1	Advisory Group

#### Example 4: Welcoming Public Spaces (Palmerston North Welcoming Plan)

Outcome	Key actions	Timeframes	Lead roles
Newcomers and receiving communities feel welcome in and comfortable using public spaces	Display more public artwork and imagery that reflects the diversity of the city.	Ongoing	Community groups, Palmerston North City Council
	Work with Palmerston North City Council staff operating in this area to ensure the Welcoming Communities outcomes are considered in new projects.	Ongoing	Palmerston North City Council

Source: Welcoming Plans (Ashburton, Southland, Whanganui, Palmerston North)



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“Our [Plan development] process received great feedback from the community. They saw that we [Council] didn’t just put something together then show it to them – the plan was built based on their feedback and input, and was iterated and changed based on further feedback and engagement”.

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## Findings

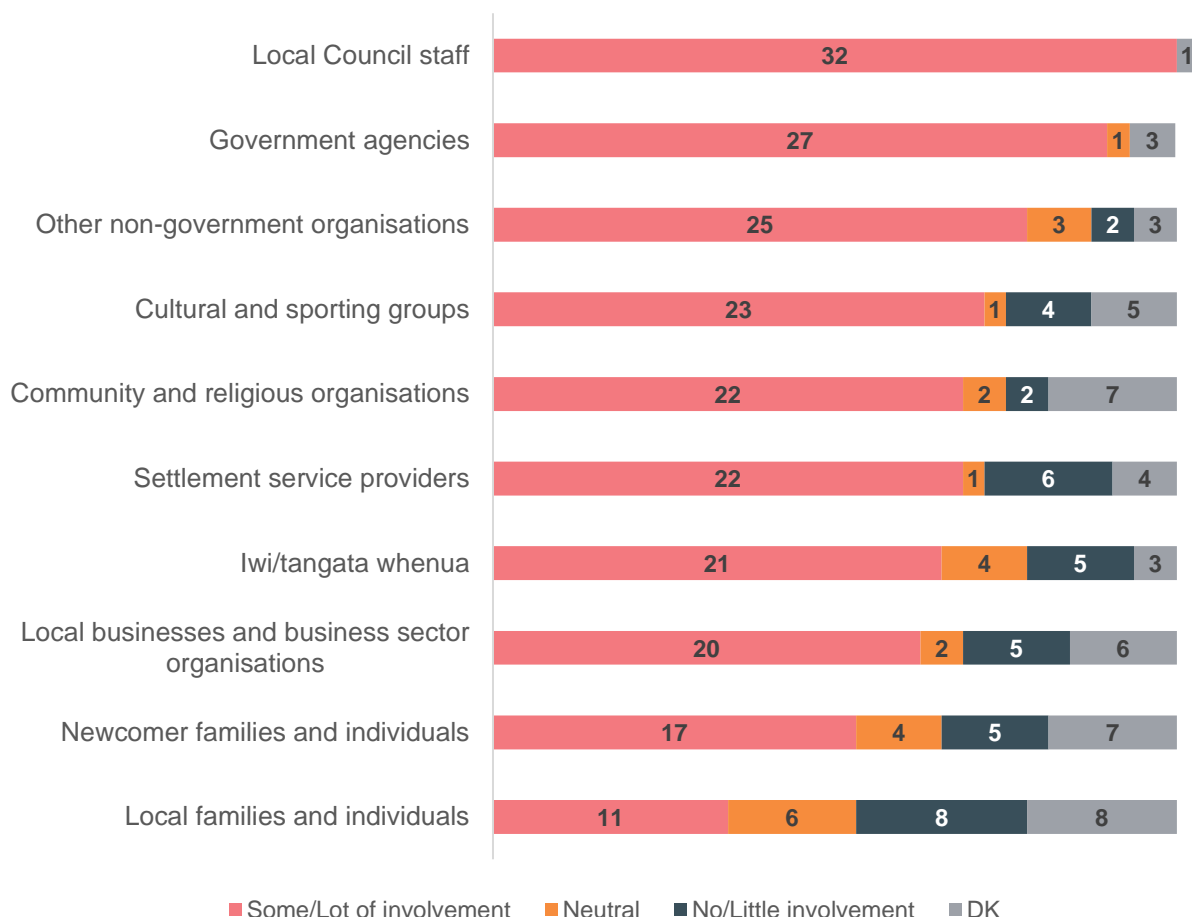
The Welcoming Plan is expected to be informed by a range of community stakeholders, to ensure the plan reflects a diverse range of perspectives. It will also support the plan being owned by the community.

Pilot site stakeholders were surveyed for their view on how well the following range of groups were involved in developing their Council’s Welcoming Plan. As shown in Figure 1:

- Nearly all survey respondents ( $n=32/33$ ) respondents felt that local Council staff had “some” or “a lot” of involvement in developing the plan.
- The majority of respondents ( $n=27/31$ ) felt that Government agencies had “some” or “a lot” of involvement.
- Lower levels of involvement were reported in the survey for local businesses, newcomer families, and local families. However, the stakeholder interviews showed that businesses and newcomers had been involved in the process, via local multicultural groups, and local economic development groups/Chamber of Commerce.



**Figure 1: Stakeholder involvement in developing the Welcoming Plan**



Source: MartinJenkins Welcoming Communities survey 2018

- **Overall, respondents agree that the appropriate people have been involved in developing the Plan; however there are some gaps**

Overall, the majority of respondents ( $n=40/50$ ) agreed that their Plan was informed by the correct people.

While the majority of survey respondents agreed with this statement, the interviews provided greater detail into the range of perspectives gathered to develop the Plans. Interviewees across all pilot sites, and within central government, expressed satisfaction with the range of groups and individuals who were engaged with the stocktake and the development of the Welcoming Plan. The Welcoming Communities Coordinators have put particular effort into ensuring that a representative cross-section of the community was engaged and consulted during this process.





*“We have held meetings and workshops with 30 different groups. I am really pleased with the range of people we engaged with and the views we received”.*

However, one gap identified across all pilot sites has been engagement with local iwi. While there has been some engagement with iwi across all sites, it has not been to the same extent as other groups who have participated in the Plan development process.

*“Our Māori community are there, they’re engaged in community projects – but we haven’t had direct engagement in this programme”.*

The most common reason cited for the lower level of engagement has been the volume of work already being undertaken by iwi, particularly in regards to settlements under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The iwi located within the pilot areas may not have the extra capacity to delegate specific resource to the Welcoming Communities pilot<sup>5</sup>. However, the sites have all made considerable effort in reaching out to iwi, and have received valuable feedback through this process.

*“Our iwi gave their permission for this programme to go ahead. They didn’t have the capacity to have an active role, but they fully support the concept”.*

*“I think it is about quality not quantity. We have a great relationship with the iwi in general, and we have received some fantastic ideas and feedback from them”.*

A second engagement gap identified by interviewees across some sites was the inclusion of local settlement networks (LSNs). The LSNs operate within regions across the country, and provide settlement advice and support to newcomers. This includes information about events and activities, and weekly coffee meetings to help people to connect. Given the central role played by the LSNs in welcoming newcomers, these groups need to be engaged directly in the development and delivery of Welcoming Plans.

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**“We are very happy with the engagement we have had. The whole process has been strong – the stocktake in particular helped us engage with groups we didn’t even know existed”.**

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- **It is important to engage with community groups early**

The sites acknowledge that time was an issue in the Plan development process. Funding was not approved by Immigration New Zealand until June 2017, with an expectation of delivering an early draft Welcoming Plan in April 2018. Following the approval of funding it took some months for Councils to recruit a Coordinator – the Whanganui Coordinator started in November 2017, and the Tauranga/Western Bay of Plenty Coordinator did not start until January 2018. This constrained the available time to conduct the stocktake of Council and community policies, programmes and activities, in particular being able to thoroughly engage with local groups.

<sup>5</sup> Feedback received from one pilot site highlights that their region has multiple iwi. As a result, they have faced greater challenge in getting engagement, as it is not appropriate to only have a representative from one iwi on their Advisory Group.



The pilot sites emphasised that the majority of the local community groups and service providers in their regions were staffed by volunteers or part-time personnel, with very limited time. It is critical to approach these groups early, to ensure they are aware they will be needed to provide their local insights into the pilot and can plan accordingly.

- **The Plan needs to be developed and delivered collaboratively**

The majority of survey respondents ( $n=39/51$ ) agreed that their Welcoming Plan will make a real difference to their local community.

The Council and the local community each have a critical role in the development of the Plan and the success of Welcoming Communities: without buy-in and support from both parties the development of the Plan and the delivering of activities will not be successful. Several Advisory Group members referred to their pilot and Plan as being ‘community-led’ – meaning that, rather than being seen as something imposed on the community by the Council, the Council had worked to make sure the community were equal stakeholders in the programme

*“Our Plan was approached as being a community-led plan, rather than a Council-based plan. This has meant much greater buy-in from a broad range of community groups and organisations”.*

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**“Our Coordinator has galvanised more focus on this topic than we have ever had”.**

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While it is important to take a community-based approach, the Council must also remain central to the programme’s implementation. This is to ensure that the Welcoming Plan and the programme as a whole aligns with the specific context of each site, Each Welcoming Plan identifies specific activities and actions to be undertaken by the Council; however these actions cannot fall solely upon the Coordinator; these are responsibilities for Council overall.

*“Before starting the programme, the expectations of all parties need to be made clear. People can’t attend one meeting and think that is the end of their involvement”.*

- **Responsibility for delivering welcoming activities needs to be shared across the community**

A key element to the sustainability of Welcoming Communities is the distribution of tasks across the receiving community. Although the pilot is coordinated by Councils, the Plan and welcoming activities need to be delivered collaboratively by the Councils and community. To that end, each Welcoming Plan (or corresponding implementation plan) details the key actions, timeframes, and lead roles to deliver each activity. This ensures that the success of delivery does not fall solely on the Council, but is a whole-of-community effort.



*“For the sake of longevity, we are taking an inclusive community-led approach to delivering Welcoming Communities. Welcoming Communities is something we want to be done with the community, not to them. So it is important that the community shares and is engaged in delivering this work”.*

- **Scope of the engagement needs to be clearly defined**

The need to clarify the scope of the engagement falls into two categories. The first is the need to clarify who the pilot is aimed at. While the Welcoming Communities programme focuses on newcomers from overseas, defined as *“recent migrants, former refugees, and international students”*<sup>6</sup>, the Standard acknowledges that newcomers from other parts of New Zealand may also benefit from the pilot. As part of the establishment and implementation of Welcoming Communities, the Council, Advisory Group, and Coordinators need to educate local residents about the programme. This includes informing locals about the intended outcomes of Welcoming Communities and the value of newcomers to their region’s propensity. It also involves equipping them with tools and information to welcoming newcomers.

This is an important distinction to be made in the local community.

*“There was a lot of confusion around the key messaging and who the project was for – immigrants, new migrants, or all people who may be new”.*

The second area of clarification is to keep the Welcoming Communities pilot distinct from more general issues regarding immigration. Pilot site stakeholders commented that, in the course of their welcoming activities or events, members of the public have raised a range of immigration related issues including concerns regarding visa applications. It is important for the Coordinators to be equipped with the right messages to front-foot these approaches, to prevent Welcoming Communities being conflated with other matters related to immigration.

*“Some sites found that people thought the programme was an opportunity to find out about visas and Immigration New Zealand policy. This made it harder to get the Welcoming Communities message across”.*

<sup>6</sup> Putting out the Welcome Mat, p3



## Resourcing and programme support

A key component of the pilot is resourcing, primarily the availability of funding. Each pilot receives \$50,000 per annum from Immigration New Zealand for the two-year pilot; additionally the sites received a further \$9,500 from Immigration New Zealand towards new Welcoming Plan activities. Councils at the pilot sites are also expected to provide resourcing and support, along with securing funding or sponsorship from alternative sources to implement Welcoming Plan activities.

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**“Resourcing isn’t a huge issue currently, but at the end of the pilot it will be”.**

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## Findings

Survey respondents were asked about the level of resourcing provided by the Council for Welcoming Communities. The majority of respondents ( $n=33/41$ ) agreed that the Welcoming Communities pilot received a good level of funding from their Council.

In addition to resourcing, survey respondents were asked how well supported they felt by their Council. Nearly all respondents ( $n=33/35$ ) felt well supported by their Council(s), both in terms of general support as well as specific resources to set-up the pilot and develop a Welcoming Plan.

Survey respondents were also asked whether or not they anticipated any longer-term resourcing gaps for their programme after the end of the pilot programme period. Overall, most respondents ( $n=20/31$ ) anticipated resourcing issues in their programme, long-term. When asked to provide examples of the resourcing gaps or issues they anticipated, respondents cited:

- a lack of sustainable funding to deliver welcoming activities
- a lack of funding to employ a Coordinator after the pilot concludes
- insufficient personnel (within Council and within partner organisations) to drive the Plan and activities
- excessive workload for the Coordinators.

*“Our aspirational Welcoming Plan will require commitment to human resourcing over the long-term”.*

Interviewees identified two primary concerns, which were common across all sites:

- **Retaining the Coordinator is the principal concern of all sites**

The key resourcing concern raised by all sites was the long-term funding of their Coordinator position. The time commitment of the Coordinators varies across sites, with a mixture of part-time and full-time roles – the seed funding provided by Immigration New Zealand resources the Coordinator position for the duration of the pilot; however only one site has confirmed funding for the Coordinator beyond 2019.



*“The biggest concern I have is the expiration of the Coordinator’s contract. We need to have something in place to ensure the longevity of the programme”.*

The majority of sites have successfully listed Welcoming Communities in their Council’s Long-Term Plan, securing funding towards welcoming activities for at least 12 months following the completion of the pilot. However, these allocations do not contribute towards the salary of the Coordinator position.

- **Funding is a shared concern across the sites**

Councillors and Advisory members at the pilot sites have experienced difficulty in convincing some of their elected officials to see the longer-term benefits of funding Welcoming Communities beyond the pilot period.

*“Resourcing is an enormous issue. We have to find the resource and the money. We didn’t know about this long enough ago to be able to budget for it - I mean, we’ll do it! – but we may have to reallocate funding from other areas”.*

An important consideration raised by the sites was the tension between the short-term nature of the pilot, and the long-term outcomes sought by Welcoming Communities. That is, although pilot and associated funding lasts for a period of two years, the desired outcomes – changing community perceptions towards newcomers, and creating a truly welcoming environment – will take much longer.

Although the sites are all convinced of the importance of Welcoming Communities to the long-term goals of their regions, there are differing views as to how Welcoming Communities should be funded – whether the programme be entirely funded by Immigration New Zealand, entirely by the Council, or a combination of funding from both sources. However, the majority of interviewees were optimistic about securing long-term funding for Welcoming Communities. At every site – notably Advisory Group members and Coordinators – are adamant that the Welcoming Communities programme will continue beyond the pilot period.

*“The issue of future funding is a handbrake conversation – we need to engage with the now and make it successful, then turn our attention towards funding”.*

- **Pilot sites feel well-supported by Immigration New Zealand**

Advisory Group members and Coordinators placed particular emphasis on the support and guidance which their site receives from Immigration New Zealand, specifically the Relationship Managers, and key Wellington-based staff, particularly the Welcoming Communities Senior Advisor. This includes the provision of material such as the *Putting out the Welcome Mat* resource to assist in developing the Welcoming Plan, and the ongoing engagement of staff in providing support, information, and material to the pilot sites.

*“I could not speak more highly of Immigration New Zealand, they are absolutely fantastic”.*

*“We have a great connection with our Relationship Manager. [They] are completely over everything, and very approachable and easy to talk to”.*

The most cited means by which the pilot sites (primarily the Coordinators) felt supported by Immigration New Zealand were:



- **The role Wellington-based staff play in facilitating Wellington-based workshops and meetings** - these enable the Coordinators to meet face-to-face and engage more substantively.

*“These meetings really help us [Coordinators] to share information with each other, which can be harder during our teleconferences”.*

- **On-the-ground support from Relationship Managers** – the Relationship Managers are viewed as a more direct, on-the-ground resource for the pilot sites. The Relationship Managers have been a vital source of advice for the Coordinators, particularly in addressing visa and immigration queries tangential to Welcoming Communities.

*“Having our relationship manager regularly visit us is great. [They] help to facilitate meetings, update us with news and relevant information about newcomers, and organise workshops and information sessions”.*

- **Openness and approachability of the Wellington-based staff** – the Coordinators feel confident in reaching out to Immigration New Zealand when they have concerns, or are in need of guidance or information in general. The Immigration New Zealand team are proactive in distributing new information and resources which they feel will be of use to the pilot sites. Furthermore, the Coordinators praised the Immigration New Zealand team for their engagement with the pilot and the ongoing delivery of support and guidance material.

*“They [Immigration New Zealand] are very open and willing to provide us with advice and support”.*

*“[They] are very friendly. They take our advice on board, and respect our input and perspectives from the local context”.*

The only critique of Immigration New Zealand expressed by the sites was the volume of email information the sites receive. The sites have requested a prioritisation of correspondence, to enable them to easily see which correspondence requires action, and which is purely informative.



# EARLY OUTCOMES AT THE PILOT SITES

This section provides a summary of the outcomes exhibited to date, as a result of the pilot.

The next phase of the evaluation, reporting in September 2019, will provide a comprehensive summary of the full range of outcomes evident at that time.

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**“Welcoming Communities has been a catalyst to have different conversations than we were having, which is resulting in different outcomes in the community”.**

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## Findings

- **Stronger links and connections are forming within communities**

The most common outcome across the sites was the development of new relationships and connections (or the reinvigoration of old relationships) between community groups, and between community groups and the Council.

*“Welcoming Communities dovetails really nicely with activities already underway in the town”.*

The primary reason given for these new connections was the stocktake exercise. The stocktakes highlighted for the Councils the activities and programmes already underway, and identified gaps. As the Councils engaged with more groups, it created a *“flurry of activity and discussion between groups, all framed around newcomers”*, which helped to foster and facilitate these new connections.

*“There is now more cohesion amongst different parties because of it [Welcoming Communities]. People with an interest in this area are now working together much closer”.*

*“The stocktake has been absolutely key in building great relationships. We know there are a couple of schools who are really engaged with the Chinese language, and we connected them with the local Chinese language group - so it isn't just the Chinese community organising events now, it goes broader than that”.*

- **Councils are more visible in the community in promoting diversity and inclusion**

Councils are proudly taking an active leadership role in the delivery of the Welcoming Communities programme. This feedback was common across all sites, and from a broad range of stakeholders. In particular, elected officials were seen as being more prominent proponents of diversity and welcoming newcomers to their town.



*“Our elected representatives are well informed. They are very supportive of the programme, and are very visible at community group events and things like citizenship ceremonies”.*

Importantly, Councils are not simply ‘talking the talk’ in this area; rather they are actively modelling being open and welcoming.

*“Our Council are more aware, and are becoming more and more welcoming themselves. They clearly see the benefit and the merit of being involved in a project like this, and they are supportive”.*

- **An explicit shift in focus from ‘fitting in’ to ‘welcoming’**

Welcoming Communities facilitates a blend of inclusivity and integration. The majority of stakeholder interviews expressed pride at this changing of conversations within their communities – from the idea of newcomers ‘fitting in’, to an emphasis on locals being welcoming to newcomers. In advance of the formal publication of the Welcoming Plans, communities are already shifting the way in which they view and speak about newcomers.

*“The main shift we have seen in the community is a shift from the onus being on newcomers ‘fitting in’, to being on the community to be more welcoming”.*

Welcoming Communities has been the impetus for this shift in conversation. Interviewees felt that the pilot gave a measure of weight and authority to engage in these conversations with the community, rather than it solely being an individual Council idea.

*“We are already changing the conversation. We don’t just want newcomers saying ‘thank you for having us’; we are seeing locals saying ‘thank you for coming to our community’”.*

*“In our work, we are using Welcoming Communities to differentiate ourselves from other Councils in New Zealand, and also to say “look at the great things happening in other towns around the world”.*

- **A general change in the perception of newcomers and diversity**

Over the course of the evaluation, a number of themes have emerged which can be clustered around the concept of general changes in community perceptions. Stakeholders were in agreement that their communities were more aware of diversity than ever before, due to a range of considerations including Council discussions, increased media coverage of cultural events and activities, and the promotion of Welcoming Communities within the community.

*“Some of our more ‘traditional-thinking’ Councillors are beginning to change their views, and become more open towards newcomers”.*

Stakeholders across all sites stated that they starting to view everything in their communities through a ‘welcoming lens’. People are becoming more mindful of the ‘optics’ of their communities – “how would the community *look* to a new person coming in”? This has been reflected in communities making a more conscious effort to display multicultural artwork in public spaces, multi-lingual street signs and information boards, and a mindfulness in ensuring promotional material is reflective of the diversity in the region.

*“I remember looking down the main street – we had various flags attached to the lampposts, promoting the city as a destination – and I was shocked to register the lack of diversity in the faces of the people*





*on the flags. This is just one example of where we have begun to be more consciously focused on diversity”.*



# INITIAL LESSONS FROM THE PILOT SITES

Welcoming Communities stakeholders were asked for any lessons they have learned to date, or any advice they would impart to prospective new Councils joining Welcoming Communities. This section provides a summary of the key lessons shared by the stakeholders.

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**“Getting everybody in the waka right from the very beginning is key”.**

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- **Early engagement with the community is vital**

The majority of community groups who need to have input into the stocktake and the development of the Welcoming Plan are staffed by volunteers, or part-time staff. It is important for Councils to give these groups advanced notice of their input into the pilot, to ensure they can fully engage and make the best use of their time.

- **The role of the coordinator is critical to the delivery of Welcoming Communities**

Each of the stakeholder interviews emphasised how vital the appointment of the Coordinator is. The Coordinators share a common set of skills and competencies, which can be summarised as:

- a dedication to ensuring the success of the pilot, and a concern for the wellbeing of newcomers
- adept at building and maintaining relationships (both within Council, and within the wider community)
- extensive community development expertise
- excellent communication skills
- excellent project management capability.

- **Early direction on the accreditation process is needed**

Pilot sites have a measure of apprehension around the accreditation process, which is yet to be developed. Pilot site stakeholders were concerned that their accreditation may be impacted if they failed to undertake specific activities at the beginning of their pilot, not knowing that these activities



would be important to their accreditation. It is important for Immigration New Zealand to proactively provide information on the accreditation process.

- **Councils need to begin funding conversations early**

At this early stage, some pilot sites have chosen to focus on the development and implementation of welcoming activities, rather than on conversations about future funding: either internal Council conversations about ongoing funding commitments, or external conversations with potential funders. However, as the pilot advances, Councillors have raised questions regarding the status of funding following the completion of the pilot in 2019. It is important for Councils and Coordinators to begin these conversations early, to ensure all funding options are explored – including the inclusion of Welcoming Communities into Council's Long-Term Plans, identifying possible alternative sources of funding to implement welcoming activities, and partnering with others in the community who can fund or resource activities.

- **The need for a scoping phase prior to Council's joining the programme**

A scoping phase prior to a Council electing to join Welcoming Communities would be beneficial. A scoping period would allow Councils to consider their preparedness and commitment to join the Welcoming Communities network. This phase would enable Councils with an interest in becoming a 'welcoming community' to have full information on Welcoming Communities and its objectives. It would also serve to clarify expectations, roles and responsibilities of all parties.



# NEXT STEPS FOR THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES PILOT

In addition to the formal launches of the Welcoming Plans in 2018, the 2018/2019 period will be a busy time for the Welcoming Communities pilot site, working with INZ. Activities including continuing to promote and socialise the programme, implementing or facilitating welcoming activities, co-designing the Welcoming Communities accreditation process (between Immigration New Zealand and the pilot sites), monitoring and assessing welcoming activity progress and outcomes, continuing to sharing best practice and celebrating success.

The Welcoming Communities evaluation will include an assessment of these areas in the final report, due in September 2019.



## Timeline of the evaluation - 2019

The evaluation activities conducted to date will be repeated during 2019. The following timeline lists the evaluation activities to be between September 2018 and the conclusion of the evaluation in September 2019.



# APPENDIX 1: THE WELCOMING COMMUNITIES STANDARD FOR NEW ZEALAND

Figure 2: Welcoming Communities Standard for New Zealand

The outcomes-based standard is organised around eight elements critical to building a 'Welcoming Community':



## 1. Inclusive Leadership

Local government, tangata whenua and other community leaders work together to create, advocate for and continue to foster a welcoming and inclusive community. They lead a shared plan to increase connections between newcomers and existing residents.



## 2. Welcoming Communications

People of all cultures and backgrounds feel included, listened to and well informed through a range of ways that take into account their different communication needs.



## 3. Equitable Access

Opportunities to access services and activities and to participate in the community are available to all, including newcomers.





#### **4. Connected and Inclusive Communities**

People feel safe in their identity and that they are connected with and belong in the community. There are high levels of trust and understanding between members of the receiving community and newcomers.

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#### **5. Economic Development, Business and Employment**

Communities maximise and harness the economic development opportunities that newcomers can offer. Councils work with business associations to promote the contribution that newcomer business owners and skilled migrants make to the region's economy.

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#### **6. Civic Engagement and Participation**

Newcomers feel welcome to fully participate in the community. Newcomers are active in all forms of civic participation.

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#### **7. Welcoming Public Spaces**

Newcomers and receiving communities feel welcome in and comfortable using public spaces.

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#### **8. Culture and Identity**

There is a shared sense of pride in being part of a culturally rich and vibrant community. People feel their culture is respected and valued by other members of the community. There are opportunities to learn about each other's cultures.

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Source: Immigration New Zealand

