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Well-being and local government

A New Zealand Case Study

Kaipara District Council; its responsibilities
and responses to the regional museums
of Kaipara,
2002 - 2011

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

This thesis examines the concept of 'well-being', as first introduced by the Local Government Act in 2002, with particular emphasis given to cultural well-being. With no definitions in the legislation, it does this by focusing firstly on understanding the meaning of the terms and then secondly, by a case study of one local authority and its response to cultural well-being through relationships with the three local museums.

Kaipara District Council (KDC), a small, rural local authority, was chosen as the case study. Three key research questions were posed. What is the meaning of "well-being" in the context of the LGA 2002? How is well-being, and in particular cultural well-being addressed by KDC and its long term planning documents? How does KDC work with the regional museums of Kaipara to meet the legislative mandate for cultural well-being? Answers were sought by undertaking an historical study of well-being and its long development on the international scene, then concentrating on KDC's long term planning documents. An interview with the district's Mayor about the practical application of cultural well-being and relationships with the regional museums, was offset with interviews conducted with representatives of each heritage organization about the reality of District Council/Museum interaction from their perspective.

The research demonstrates that even without a definition, there was abundance of information available to form a good understanding of the concept. On the other hand, there was so much information that finding an encompassing definition for the term would be impossible. The research also demonstrates the difficulties that small authorities, with inadequate staffing and governance representatives, face when presented with a complex piece of legislation. Both Council and Museum representatives struggled to comprehend the meaning of cultural well-being but while KDC believed its response was sufficient, the regional Museums were not satisfied. This thesis argues that KDC falls short in meeting its cultural well-being responsibilities but there is much that the region's

museums can do themselves to improve the situation. The solution for Kaipara's museums is transferable to every other museum in New Zealand that finds itself facing similar circumstances.

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Reader's Note

A low risk notification for this project was submitted to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee on 24 May 2011 and recorded on the Low Risk database. The names of key research participants are used with their permission.

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List of Abbreviations

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CO	Community Outcomes
DIA	Department of Internal Affairs <i>Te Tari Taiwhenua</i>
DM	Dargaville Museum
KDC	Kaipara District Council
LGA 2002	Local Government Act 2002
LGNZ	Local Government New Zealand
LTCCP	Long Term Council Community Plan
LTP	Long Term Plan
MCH	Ministry for Culture and Heritage <i>Manatū Taonga</i>
MED	Ministry of Economic Development (since 1 July 2012 part of the integrated into the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment <i>Hikina Whakatutuki</i>)
MCWWS	Mangawhai Community Waste Water Scheme
MEF	Mangawhai Endowment Fund
MFE	Ministry for the Environment <i>Manatū Mō Te Taiao</i>
MM	Mangawhai Museum
MSD	Ministry for Social Development <i>Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora</i>
NZ	New Zealand
SNZ	Statistics New Zealand <i>Tatauranga Aotearoa</i>
SOLGM	New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers

TKM

The Kauri Museum