

Tasman District Council

Environmental Information Activity Management Plan

2009-2019



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Environmental Information Activity Management Plan: What is it and why is it produced?

The Environmental Information Activity Management Plan (AMP) covers one of 26 activities addressed in the Tasman District Council Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). This plan is, therefore, strongly linked to the overall strategic direction for the district. The LTCCP is the document and process that alerts the community to the key issues and strategies contained in this document.

The purpose of this plan is to outline and to summarise in one place, the Council's efforts in establishing and maintaining an efficient resource information base to allow Council to properly discharge its resource management functions and to provide advice to the public on environmental conditions and issues affecting the District. It also involves investigation, monitoring, and analysis of significant environmental issues affecting or likely to affect the District.

The AMP demonstrates responsible management of the function on behalf of ratepayers and stakeholders and assists with the achievement of strategic goals and statutory compliance. The AMP combines management, financial, and technical practices to ensure that the level of service required by the law and expected by the community is provided in the most operationally effective and sustainable manner.

This AMP is based on existing levels of service, currently available information, and the existing knowledge/judgement of the Council staff.

This plan has been prepared in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 and in accordance with the general principles of Basic Asset Management recommended in the International Infrastructure Management Manual.

1.2 Rationale For The Council's Involvement in Environmental Information

Council undertakes monitoring for a variety of reasons including:

- Fulfilling legislative requirements
- Monitoring is the only way we know if we are achieving the Anticipated Environmental Outcomes set in the Tasman Resource Management Plan
- Producing information that enables council to produce more targeted and appropriate planning controls and resource consent conditions (tweaking where we need to be more or less strict)
- Monitoring can identify new issues that require addressing in the Tasman Resource Management Plan
- Better target Council education and promotion activities to achieve greatest effect
- Assuring sustainable resource use can lead to economic advantages for the business sector and the public generally.



A purpose of local government, under the Local Government Act 2002 (section 10(b)) is "to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future." The Environmental Information activity contributes to this well-being of the community, and the sustainable development of the district, by:

- better understanding the state of the environment and pressures on, and risks to, the resource base of the District
- providing unique expertise to ensure that all tasks are effectively implemented, and
- applying best practice and professional judgement to all investigations and decisions.

The Council carries out this activity largely in-house where the skills needed to do the job are available within Council. Where the skills are not available or inefficient to keep in-house, the Council subcontracts out the work, while maintaining a project management role.

While the Council is required to monitor the state of the environment there is some discretion over the manner and degree to which the environmental information functions are delivered. Allocation of monitoring effort is based on the following criteria¹:

- 1. The significance of the issue for community well-being and ecological health. A scientific risk-based approach is taken in this instance.
- 2. Current level of public concern about an issue
- 3. The need for more information on the issue to answer policy or regulatory questions
- 4. Rate of change associated with the issue

1.3 Council's Principal Objectives

The Council's stated vision statement is for "An interactive community living safely in the garden that is Tasman District".

This is supported by the Council's Mission statement to "Enhance community wellbeing and quality of life".

A number of corporate objectives directly relate to the Activity Management process:

- (a) To implement policies and financial management strategies that advance the Tasman District.
- (b) To ensure sustainable management of natural and physical resources, and security of environmental standards.

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As developed in the TDC Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Strategy



- (c) To sustainably manage infrastructural assets relating to Tasman District.
- (d) To enhance community development and the social, natural, cultural and recreational assets relating to Tasman District.
- (e) To promote sustainable economic development in the Tasman District.

1.4 Community Outcomes

Through consultation, eight Community Outcomes have been identified. These community outcomes are linked to the four well beings and Council's objectives as shown in Table 1.



Table 1: The Four Wellbeings, Community Outcomes, Council Objectives, Group and Activities

Community Wellbeing		Community Outcomes	Council Objectives	Council Groups and Activities	Council Activities
Environmental wellbeing	1. 2. 3.	environment is bountiful, healthy, clean and protected. Our built urban and rural environments are functional, pleasant, safe and sustainably managed.	To ensure sustainable management of natural and physical resources and security of environmental standards. To sustainably manage infrastructural assets relating to Tasman District.	Environment and Planning Transportation Sanitation, drainage and water supply	Resource Policy Environmental Information Resource Consents and Compliance Environmental Education, Advocacy and Operations Regulatory Services Mapua Rehabilitation Regional Cycling and Walking Strategy. Land Transportation Coastal Structures, Aerodromes Refuse Wastewater Stormwater management Rivers Water Supply
Social and Cultural Wellbeing	4.5.6.7.	well, enjoys an excellent quality of life and supports those with special needs. Our community understands regional history, heritage and culture. Our diverse community enjoys access to a range of spiritual, cultural, social, educational and recreational services.	To enhance community development and the social, natural, cultural and recreational assets relating to Tasman District.	Cultural services and grants. Recreation and leisure. Community support services.	Community recreation Camping grounds Parks and Reserves Development impact levies Community facilities Emergency management Community housing Governance
Economic Wellbeing	8.	Our growing and sustainable economy provides opportunities for us all.	To implement policies and financial management strategies that advance. To promote sustainable development in the Tasman District.	Council Enterprises.	Forestry Property Council controlled organisations.



The way in which the Environmental Information activity contributes to community outcomes is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Community Outcomes to which the Activity primarily contributes

	Community Outcomes	How the Activity Contributes		
1.	Our unique and special natural environment is bountiful, healthy, clean and protected.	By monitoring and investigating the state of the environment and the trends, risks, and pressures it faces, we can make better decisions and have in place policies and plans that promote sustainable management of natural and physical resources, and where necessary, that regulate activities which overtime would degrade the environment or place resources under pressure, keeps Tasman special		
2.	Our built urban and rural environments are functional, pleasant, safe and sustainably managed.	By monitoring and investigating the state of the environment and the trends, risks, and pressures it faces, we can make better decisions and have in place policies and plans that contribute to this outcome		
3.	Our transport and essential services are sufficient, efficient and sustainably managed.	N/A		
4.	Our vibrant community is safe, well, enjoys an excellent quality of life and supports those with special needs.	Our flood warning system and work to identify contamination risks are designed to promote safety of people and community well-being.		
5.	Our community understands regional history, heritage and culture.	N/A		
6.	Our diverse community enjoys access to a range of spiritual, cultural, social, educational and recreational services.	N/A		
7.	Our participatory community contributes to district-decision making and development.	We make environmental information available and work with groups in the community to help them make environmentally sound decisions		
8.	Our growing and sustainable economy provides opportunities for us all.	Resource information identifies opportunities for economic development in the use and development of resources of benefit to current and future generations, and potential hazards and constraints affecting such opportunities.		



2. LEVELS OF SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2.1 Introduction

A key objective of this AMP is to match what we do in providing the service as required by law and in accordance with expectations of the community and their willingness to pay for the service. Activity management planning requires a clear understanding of why we do what we do. The Levels of Service are intended:

- to inform people of the proposed type and level of service to be offered (now and in the future),
- as a focus for the work required to deliver the agreed level of service,
- to enable people to assess suitability, affordability and equity of the services offered.

There are many factors that need to be considered when deciding what level of service the Council will aim to provide. These factors include:

- 1. Council needs to aim to understand and meet the needs and expectations of the community.
- 2. Council must meet its statutory obligations as outlined in Section 1.2
- 3. The services must be operated within Council policy and objectives as outlined in Section 1.
- 4. The community must be able to fund the level of service provided.

2.2 Customer Research and Expectations

The Council's knowledge of customer expectations and preferences is based on a variety of consultation activities. These are summarised in Appendix 2 and include:

- Customer surveys
- Public meetings
- Feedback from elected members, advisory groups and working parties
- Analysis of customer service requests and complaints
- Consultation via the LTCCP and Annual Plan processes.

2.3 The Activity Goal and Principal Objectives

2.3.1 Activity Goal

The Environmental Information activity goal is to:

1. Achieve a robust and cost effective approach to environmental monitoring and resource investigations that will provide a good understanding of the District's



resources and the ability to assess environmental trends and manage risks to the environment.

2.3.2 Principal Objectives

The principle objectives of the Environmental Information activity are to:

- Promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources
- Collect and manage information about the state of the Tasman environment
- Provide sound and rational advice on development and other resource opportunities
- Provide accurate information and maintain appropriate records arising from the Environmental Information activity

2.4 Future Planned Levels of Service, Performance Measures

No significant change in direction is anticipated other than building the internal capacity of staff to undertake the work rather than using consultants (where appropriate).

Bearing these facts in mind, the Council will monitor and report its actual performance against the following measures:

Table 3: Performance Measures

We will know we are meeting the Level of Service when	Current Performance Target	Forecast Performance Target
The level of community support for Council's resource management policy and planning work is rated as fairly satisfied or better through community survey	72%	75%
Ensuring our hydrometric network is available for regional hazard management.	99%	99%
Timely reporting of air quality data with the aim of having no more than one exceedance of National Environmental Standard by 2013.	Achieved	Annual report
Timely reporting of recreational bathing water quality with the aim of having no beach or swimming hole closures.	Achieved	Annual report
At least one issue based State of the Environment report to be released each year	Achieved	Issue based SOE report released
Undertake targeted investigations of resource	Achieved	At least one



We will know we are meeting the Level of Service when	Current Performance Target	Forecast Performance Target
issues with the findings released via the Environment and Planning committee and via the Councils website.		report to EPC and website

When investigations are completed reports will be provided to the Environment and Planning Committee and disseminated through the Council website and other channels.

3. EXISTING SITUATION DESCRIBED

3.1 Flood Management

Council is required to be prepared for civil emergencies, including *reducing* the risk of hazards, being *prepared* for hazards, and *responding* to hazards. The most prevalent hazard this district faces, and the one that has caused the most damage in recent times, is flooding. At present Council provides flood warnings for 10 major rivers, and other smaller river systems. At risk is the life and property of landowners along rivers, but more significantly the townships of Takaka, Motueka, Murchison, and Brightwater. Additionally, parts of the district's roads and state highways can be inundated by flooding.

Council has a district wide hydrometric network for the measurement, recording, and reporting of rainfall (and other climatic conditions), river and groundwater flows. The Council has appropriate software to operate the system and assist in flood forecasting. Appendix 3 is an Asset Inventory showing the equipment associated with this activity. Note that it is also used by other sub-activities within the Environmental Information function.

3.2 State of the Environment (SOE) Monitoring

State of the Environment monitoring programme is required under Section 35 of the Resource Management Act and is also based on commitments in the Regional Policy Statement and TRMP.

This sub-activity is grouped around monitoring land, coast, rivers and lakes, water, air, and people and communities. Specific examples of monitoring programmes include ambient air quality in Richmond in line with the priorities of the National Environmental Standard for Air, pan-catchment monitoring of surface and groundwater quality, sampling and reporting on summer coastal and freshwater bathing water quality, the collection and provision of coastal hazard and processes information, and river cross section. We commit to reporting annually on at least one SOE monitoring programme. Much of this work is ongoing and long term and continues throughout the planning period.

3.3 Water Resource Investigations

Water is a significant resource upon which we depend for our physical, economic, and environmental well-being. Council has in place a programme to investigate region wide water resources, in order to better understand and manage, the water



resource by catchment.² This involves effort to quantify availability of water in order to review allocation limits, to assess in-stream and abstractive values, and to look at water augmentation options. In conjunction with Council's Engineering Department we are involved in looking at water supply and demand management options to ensure the community has on-going access to potable and secure water. Due to the large and variable nature of the Tasman District's hydrology with its unique catchments, integrated water resources investigations and monitoring is planned and carried out.

3.4 Pollution Management

This sub-activity covers work involved in maintaining and updating a database of sites associated with hazardous substances, related site assessments and remediation by affected landowners. It also covers work associated with the disposal of unwanted agrichemicals and investigation into sites not presently recorded as containing hazardous substances.

3.5 Maintenance and Operating

The operation and maintenance expenditure over the next 10 years is detailed in Figure 1 below. Costs are principally labour, laboratory, and contract costs associated with what is essentially an investigation function. Ensuring the hydrology, meteorology, water quality and air quality monitoring systems continue to operate reliably, efficiently, and accurately involves maintenance expenditure and planned capital renewals. The annual direct cost over the 10 years is predicted to remain relatively consistent as is the level of service.

Figure 1: Estimated Expenditure 2009-2019

3.6 Operating and Resource Issues

The most important issues include:

1. Managing workload efficiently to provide timely and high quality advice and service

² Catchments are defined in the Tasman Resource Management Plan and cover Buller, Waimea, Moutere, Motueka, and Takaka.



- 2. Having in place monitoring systems to track performance and that the activity contributes to achieving community outcomes.
- 3. Managing on-going exposure to risks
- 4. Maintaining sufficient capability in-house to cover the wide range of resource management responsibilities facing a unitary authority.

3.7 Business Continuity / Emergency Management

The activity has no formal Business Continuity Plan. The key area of risk is the threat of disruption to services resulting from loss of significant numbers of staff over a prolonged period or such events as fire in buildings. Council's Business Interruption insurance covers "loss consequent upon interruption to the business as a result of damage to property insured by the Material Damage policy, resulting in losses or increased costs..."

Council has a daily backup-to-tape schedule in place for all information stored on the computer system and a mirror system which is updated at 10 minute intervals is located off-site at the Richmond Library. These arrangements appropriately backup all critical data which can be retrieved if required. Hard copies of all applications and reports are kept within the Records System which is fire-proofed. Some files are electronically scanned but this is an on-going project. Council's solicitor also has copies of relevant material held off-site.

Council has in place a Flood Response Manual which sets in place a system for monitoring rainfall events and responding to rising water level alarms. Key hydrology staff are critical in the event of a flooding event affecting the district.

Several monitoring programmes are fully-documented including river water quality, bathing water quality, and air quality.

4. FUTURE ISSUES

4.1 Factors Affecting Delivery and Demand for Activity

Council recognises that future demands for Environmental Information will be influenced by:

- Changes in the environmental risk profile
- Population growth and demographics
- Changes in community expectations
- Demand for resources by various users including industry
- Technological change
- Changes in legislation and Planning Documents

The impact of these influencing factors on the demand for Environmental Information and the effect on the current mode of delivery is discussed below.



4.1.1 Changes in the environmental risk profile

Through various resource management actions the risk of adverse effect from resource use activities should diminish. Where this applies, monitoring programmes or sites within monitoring programmes should be reduced. External factors such as climate change (with increased rainfall intensity and sea-level rise) may increase the risk of effects from certain activities. This may mean more monitoring to assess these effects.

4.1.2 Population Growth

The scale of population growth anticipated in the District is likely to be reflected in a proportionate increase in activity levels within this function. Council has used a growth model which projects forward expected growth in population and dwellings. The effect of this growth is likely to require additional resources to cope with demand for services:

4.1.3 Trends in Community Expectations

In the 2005 Community surveys there has been no indication by the Community for a change in the Council's role in the Environmental Information Activity.

4.1.4 Technological Change

Technology change has the ability to impact on the scope of service and the manner of delivery but there is no predicted technological changes that will have a significant effect on the activity in the medium term.

4.1.5 Changes in Legislation and Planning Documents

Changes to Environmental Information Activity policies may be driven from a number of directions. They could be internally driven through Council initiated changes to policy (TRMP) or externally by other organisations such as the Government. Council will continue to monitor these factors when reviewing and developing forecasts and strategies.

5. RENEWALS CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND DEPRECIATION

This activity only uses Council buildings and office equipment and vehicles which are managed as part of the business overheads.

6. FUTURE PROGRAMME

Unless the Government or Council introduce new rules and regulations, no new business costs are expected.

7. FUNDING THE ANNUAL NET COST

The current funding sources available for Environmental Information include:

- general rate
- fees and charges recovery



- sales
- sundry income

7.1 Funding Issues

The Revenue and Financing Policy in the LTCCP holds the planned funding approach to these activities. Generally, the following applies:

7.1.1 Flood Management

Council considers that community generally benefits from having in place a system for monitoring and responding to flood events. Currently the ratio is a Public 100%, Private 0% split.

7.1.2 Environmental Monitoring

The public generally benefits from Council having a good understanding of environmental pressures and trends, the information about which can go towards making good policy and consent decisions. However, having good knowledge about public resources like water, air and the coast, also benefits those people who have permission to use these resources. In recognition of this Council has in place a system of annual charges under section 36 of the Resource Management Act which obtains funds from consent holders for monitoring purpose.³ Currently the ratio is a Public 70%, Private 30% split.

7.1.3 Water Resource Investigations

The public generally benefits from Council having a good understanding of the water resource, the information about which can go towards making good policy and consent decisions. This sub-activity receives funding from the general rate but also water users through contributions to investigations and recoveries for such things as pump tests. Currently the ratio is a Public 70%, Private 30% split.

7.1.4 Pollution Investigations

The public generally benefits from Council having a good understanding of the contamination risks in the environment, information about which can go towards making good policy and consent decisions. This sub-activity receives funding from the general rate. Opportunities for recoveries are limited. Currently the ratio is a Public 100%, Private 0% split.

7.2 Schedule of Fees and Charges

The fees and charges are reviewed annually and increased at least by the CPI. Environmental monitoring activities are funded in part by annual charges set under section 36(1)(c) of the Resource Management Act based on size of take or discharge as a proxy measure for effects on, or interest in, the on-going sustainability of the resource

³ The annual charge also covers "supervision and administration costs" which fund a proportion of Council's compliance activity.





8. SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

There are no significant effects from undertaking the activity unless for instance resource investigations recommend establishing a dam to harvest water thereby affecting third party interests in land. In such cases, Council will manage this prospect by properly identifying and consulting with the associated interests.

9. SIGNIFICANT FORECASTING ASSUMPTIONS, UNCERTAINTIES, AND RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 Assumptions and Uncertainties

The most significant assumptions and uncertainties that underlie the approach that has been outlined herein are:-

- a) A reasonable degree of reliability can be placed on the population and other growth projections that have been used in this plan. However, these remain projections, and need to be carefully tracked to ensure that they remain true to what is actually happening.
- b) Government regulation and other regulatory changes are capable of changing the scope, nature and processes associated with this activity. However no allowance has been made for changes in legislation.
- c) Future budgets are based on a similar level of effort being required to respond to the demands of this activity.

9.2 Risk Management

An Integrated Risk Management Assessment programme has been introduced into Council and will continue to be developed and improved. As yet the Environmental Information Activity has not been assessed. Risks are likely to centre on changes in resource availability or quality arising from unforeseen events, loss of knowledge as staff leave, and catastrophic failure of our monitoring systems.

Council is conscious of the need, and has the following in place, to mitigate business risk:

- YK2000 report. This is a comprehensive document that identified potential failure mechanisms – the majority of which did not eventuate – but was nevertheless a worthwhile exercise.
- Council's main professional services consultant operates under a Quality Assurance manual and has ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certification.
- Council and its agents have Health and Safety Plans in place.
- There are a number of Emergency Procedures response manuals in place including Council's Flood Response Plan.

Through CallCare, Council's after-hours phone contractor, there is continuous 24-hour coverage to react to emergency situations. Council operates a Customer Services Request system where requests or complaints are logged and investigated and as necessary actioned and closed out.



10. PLAN REVIEW

This AMP is a living document that is relevant and integral to daily management of the activity. To ensure the plan remains useful and relevant an on-going process of AMP monitoring and review will be undertaken including a comprehensive review at intervals of not less than three years and each review will be completed to coincide with the next review of the LTCCP.

11. CONCLUSION

The Council will undertake its Environmental Information activities in accordance with its legal obligations and in a manner that ensures community outcomes are achieved.



APPENDIX 1: AN OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

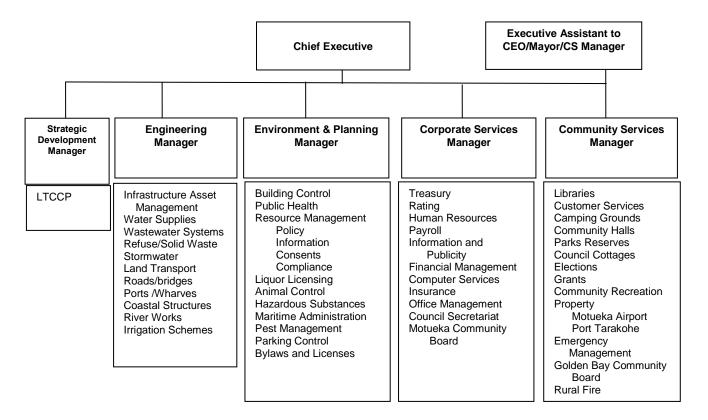
For the purpose of completeness, this Appendix gives a broad overview of the Council's organisational structure and the systems and processes that it uses to manage the whole aerodromes activity.

1.1 Organisational Structure

The Environment and Planning Manager reports to the Environment and Planning Committee which has delegated powers from the Council. The Environment and Planning Committee has overall responsibility for all Environmental Information functions.

The Tasman District Council organisational structure is shown in 2. As the chart shows, the Environmental Information falls under the Environment & Planning Manager.

Figure 2: Tasman District Council Organisation Structure





2. Management Practices, Data Systems and Decision-Making Processes

2.1 Accounting / Financial Systems

Council Accounting and Financial systems are based on Napier Computer Systems (NCS) software and GAAP Guidelines. Long term financial decisions are based on the development of 10-year financial plans. These 10-year plans are updated every three years on a cycle driven by the LTCCP.

The development of the AMP is therefore subject to the policies contained in the LTCCP which is available under separate cover.

2.2 Information Management Systems

Council is one of a number of local authorities that uses the NCS computer system as a proprietary information management package that stores information generated by the Environmental Information function. A specific Microsoft Access database exists to manage submssions, decisions and appeal in respect of plan provisions. Hard copy information is stored on subject or appeal files and held in the Council's Records Room.

2.3 Geographical Information System

The Council operates an integrated GIS system which can spatially display data and is used in carrying out the Environmental Information activity.

2.4 Delegations and Appointment Register

Council has a Delegations Register which codifies delegations to Council committees, councillors and staff. Council also has in place an Appointment Register detailing the warrants of authority held by staff.



APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSULTATION

1. Consultation

Purpose of Consultation and Types of Consultation

Council consults with the public to gain an understanding of customer expectations and preferences. This enables Council to provide a level of service that better meets the community's needs.

The Council's knowledge of customer expectations and preferences is based on:

- feedback from surveys, discussion papers, draft plan amendments
- public meetings and open days
- feedback from elected members, advisory groups and working parties,
- consultation via the Annual Plan and LTCCP process.

Council commissions customer surveys on a regular basis from the National These CommunitrakTM surveys assess the levels of Research Bureau Ltd⁴. satisfaction with key services. Council at times will undertake focussed surveys to get information on specific subjects.

2. **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders are those individuals and organisations that have interest in the management and / or operation of the activities. Stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- **Consent Applicants**
- Relevant Government Departments
- Adjoining local authorities
- iwi

Industry groups

Recreational and other community groups

⁴ Communitrak[™]: Public Perceptions and Interpretations of Council Services / Facilities and Representation, NRB Ltd October 2005.



APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY OF ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT TERMS

Activity An activity means the good or service provided by Council to achieve a

> desired outcome. Cf Section 5, LGA

Activity

Activity Management Plans are key strategic documents that describe all **Management Plan** aspects of the management of an activity. The documents feed information

directly in the Council's LTCCP, and place an emphasis on long term financial planning, community consultation, and a clear definition of service levels and

performance standards.

AM Plan See Activity Management Plan.

Annual Plan The Annual Plan provides a statement of the direction of Council and

> ensures consistency and co-ordination in both making policies and decisions concerning the use of Council resources. It is a reference document for monitoring and measuring performance for the community as

well as the Council itself.

Level of service The defined service quality for a particular activity (ie. water) or service area

> (ie. Water quality) against which service performance may be measured. Service levels usually relate to quality, quantity, reliability, responsiveness,

environmental acceptability and cost.

Long Term Council Community Plan

The Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) is the primary strategic document through which Council communicates its intentions over the next

10 years for meeting community service expectations and how it intends to fund this work. The LTCCP is a key output required of Local Authorities

under the Local Government Act 2002.

LTCCP See Long Term Council Community Plan.

LGA Local Government Act 2002

Objective An objective is a general statement of intention relating to a specific output

or activity. They are generally longer-term aims and are not necessarily

outcomes that managers can control.

Performance Indicator (PI)

A qualitative or quantitative measure of a service or activity used to compare actual performance against a standard or other target. Performance

indicators commonly relate to statutory limits, safety, responsiveness, cost, comfort, asset performance, reliability, efficiency, environmental protection

and customer satisfaction.

Performance **Monitoring**

Continuous or periodic quantitative and qualitative assessments of the actual

performance compared with specific objectives, targets or standards.

The application of a formal process to the range of possible values relating to **Risk Management**

key factors associated with a risk in order to determine the resultant ranges

of outcomes and their probability of occurrence.