

WHAT'S MISSING FROM THE FFLG RECOMMENDATIONS?

AN EXERCISE AT THE FUTURE BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT EVENT #1

Each person wrote down an idea on an index card. Then the cards were randomly exchanged and everyone gave the card they were holding a score out of five. This was repeated five times, to give each idea a total score out of 25.

Idea	Score
Online/electronic voting.	23
Local government is full of passionate people dedicated to service to their communities. Yet in general communities are not having expectations met. We have had tweaks to legislation and practice over the years but the core issues remain. I believe the system of government (central and local) needs a fundamental rethink otherwise we are simply moving the deck chairs on the Titanic.	22
Ensure best possible elected member & best productivity (from members) by making remuneration high enough for role to be a person's only job.	21.5
Central government being part of this conversation so that we can look at and talk about the best structures overall for governing Aotearoa rather than the piecemeal approach that has been undertaken.	20
Central government need to trust local government to devolve and fund health and well being functions to our communities.	20
How to engage with central government to advance these discussions – how to develop a productive relationship that they see as adding value to what they seek to achieve.	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government minister should be in cabinet. The method and mechanisms of charging rates – land value, capital value or other/new way? Remove barrier of having to enrol to vote - should be automatic. 	19
Who better to champion civics education than us?	19
A new method of rating.	19
Get the attention of government ministers and government departments. There is an opportunity to build on the fractured/frustrating relationships we have as local government. My challenge being that these appear to be a lack of understanding in the Capital about how local government works and how their decisions impact local government – often negatively – mainly through cost. Too many policies using a blanket approach. We need to strengthen our connection with these people urgently.	18
A greater sharing of the knowledge, ideas and approaches across councils including processes, systems, technology, governance structures, public/community engagement, decision-making processes etc. There is lots of inefficiency and supplication because of the lack of sharing and collaboration.	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have we sat and talked with the Crown – understood their vision/aspirations, their goals for local government. Are they interested in enhancing our business? How best do they want us to work with them? What are their rules of engagement? 	18
Best outcomes are achieved through open inclusive and honest discussion with a clear focus on what is trying to be achieved.	17
Minister of local government sits inside cabinet.	17
Better systems around elections to mitigate from the 150 word profiles to select people – use technology.	17

We need to define what services should be provided locally vs centrally to provide true wellbeing benefit to the community.	17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell a better story of what we do do for our communities. Central government only hears what we are not doing & us complaining. But what is our why? And do we believe it ourselves? I think we do, but we don't tell it well enough! I also think more international examples of where local government is working well with community and central government. 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central government need to lead by example and we need to stop competing with each other. We are stronger together if we compromise/listen/share and when required make bold decisions for mokopuna! 	16
My one big idea: we have so much potential as a sector. Why aren't we all working together to maximise that collective potential? What will it take to do that? And who will lead it, and who will be "the first follower"?	16
I believe that just as there is a minister to Auckland there should be a minister (in cabinet) for the South Island. South Island has 16/65 electorates and so no strong voice. It is more than 50% of Aotearoa and contributes strong GDP across the Island yet not heard in key areas.	16
As part of change in local government there are opportunities for greater collaboration between regional/district/city councils whilst maintaining your local structure and voice. So not a super council but a meeting of minds to find synergies/funding/bulk buying etc.	16
If government is to devolve responsibilities to local councils, it needs some real commitment and a timeline. They should make this change, but won't do so willingly. The community needs to ask and drive the idea of localism forward. – make it the will of the people. It can't succeed without this.	16
<p>Implore central government to immediately lighten the burden on local government by removing unnecessary reporting, compliance, bureaucratic requirements. Some examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requiring LTP every 5 years Significantly reducing audit requirements. Extending/softening LGOIMA request deadlines and/or response mandates 	15.5
Regional central and local government forums to align, agree and set sub regional priorities together and agree funding on a cyclical basis. Priorities should link to joint strategies and targeted at solving complex social/wellbeing/community issues together. (how it works in an event/natural disaster – marriage of funders & governance)	15
What does success for the ratepayer and community look like? Even with all the proposed changes are we sure the outcome will produce better efficiencies, productivity and more satisfied, safer communities.	15
Where is the consolidated benchmark for local government? Could we collaborate to create a disclosure regime to highlight best and low performance? We can't manage what we don't measure and lifting our own performance will be critical to achieving our goals.	15
Minister of Local government into cabinet.	15
There is a critical relationship between elected councils and their Chief Executives. Some thought may need to be given to the correct statutory rules around a CE's tenure and the way in which the employment relationship is managed (politicians as direct employer).	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant discussion of risk and liability especially in relation to climate change. Insurance is increasingly challenging. All of local government including Auckland. 	15
Improved engagement with MPs	15
The role and potential of regional government is missing. Regional leadership, environmental wellbeing and regulation, longer term thinking with permanent consequences. (eg if lakes 'flip' from nitrates, if rivers change course, if coastlines change, if pests spread unchecked)	15
Please put greater emphasis on environmental protection. Our society and economy are fully nested within a healthy environment = wellbeing.	15

Composition of councils to include non-elected professionals ie mix of democratically elected members and appointed commissioners.	14.5
Not adding extra layers of complexity to the work local government does as this filters down to the public and becomes even harder for them to participate or understand.	14
Stories of success – let's not lose sight of the things we're doing awesome in the pursuit of improving the things we need to do better. #unintended consequence.	14
Where is central government in this discussion? We're all trying to build the same communities but central government is missing from the conversation.	14
Guidance and policy for community boards' structure and funding.	14
Investment in system design leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in studies of central & local government. Establish structures to bring central and local government together to design and improve the system and outcomes. 	14
Restructure the electoral system to enable more candidates to be able to represent communities. Low funding and workload on elected members means numerous people can't be part of the system. Eg working class people can't live off councillor wage. This limits the candidate pool.	14
Not enough focus on lifting participatory/democracy for marginalised groups. Where are we asking for support to help those with disability or accessibility issues/needs? 1 in 4 New Zealanders suffer from a disability but there is no narrative about how barriers can be lifted to these people.	14
Indigenous diplomacy techniques to build consensus.	14
For central government to acknowledge the partnership with local government actually needs investment and closer collaboration. This to be signalled by the appointment of the Minister of Local Government to be in the top 15 of the Cabinet so they are part of those decisions that affect us.	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The greatest issue in local government is the ever-increasing debt burden which is essentially caused by unfunded mandates from central government. Rates, fees and charges are steadily increased by TAs but are insufficient to foster services. Hence a fresh look at LOCAL GOVERNMENT funding is required. Increasing funding by transferring [1/3]¹ of GST collected to local government would address and mitigate this issue. Additionally it would incentivise communities to work more on economic development. Simultaneously it would force central government to simplify and trim their bureaucracy. 	13
Let go of the 1989 reforms, it's time to re-imagine the structure, to place the community and environment at the top: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invert the hierarchy Question the top down approach Mayor and CEs are the roots that enable trees to flourish, council is the trunk, staff are the branches, community/te taiao are the blooming flowers and leaves. Central government is the fertile soil. 	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What commitment are we prepared to make to effect the changes that we all agreed need to happen? Are we prepared to unlock the power of our collective to drive those changes and make them happen? What level of confidence do we have that successive central governments will agree to change? Do we need to "go to the barricades?" Be stronger, more aggressive in our negotiations? We have the power. Why aren't we using it? 	13
All government departments should be required by statute to have a plan for meaningful engagement with – and bespoke long term delivery outcomes to each individual Council (and therefore local communities) (with the exception of defence and foreign affairs).	13

¹ Unclear if this was 1/3 or 1/5.

<p>Focus on all communities that are disadvantaged not just mana whenua:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable • Poor • Mental illness • Disability • Aged <p>Where are the focus groups of these people?</p> <p>Business advocacy – economic development – rural sectors</p>	13
Form follows function: we need to determine local government's future role in local governance and service delivery in term of addressing community well being before we discuss funding, structure of local government.	13
Alternative methodologies to funding and financing eg changes to rating system from a land tax on value.	12.5
What is the 'value' to the ratepayers	12
<p>The "how"?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to implement. How to make it happen. • Particularly with combative goal. 	12
We need to look at all that has been worked on to come up with a consensus for delivery of our goals.	12
That councils take hold of their own agenda for change with some significant capacity to drive a change agenda that benefits communities and does not rely on government to make it happen.	12
Focus on engagement with local communities and hapū giving them meaningful governance over their community plans and priorities. Let's call these geographic areas Manaaki hubs – centres of local communities that bring together, in a place, all the local activity and decisions of community/hapū that actions radiate out from.	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation of why people stand for council is important. • Recommendations cover civil education and training for EM & staff. • Need to invest in helping people to have right motivation to invest this time. • Example: stand to make council more efficient or fix roads but think that should be achieved by doing staff or contractors' work rather than focusing on strategic issues of funding: understanding government as management. 	12
I have the perception that central government are not interested in devolving or truly engaging with local government or in sharing the funding 'pot'. Potentially a wide gap between what we want and how we can achieve.	12
Asking central government what they want from local government, ie what do they see local government's role to be and how can they remove roadblocks and provide resources/opportunities for this to successfully be achieved.	11
<p>Given the last major local government reorganisation of 1989 hasn't really achieved expectations, should the 3 major reforms be postponed by a new government to get it right as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any of the current 3 reforms take 10 years or more to find effectiveness. • Functions and activities require a more in depth review . • Māori representation and needs/desires are still evolving and could be better incorporated. • The economic climate provides time etc etc 	11
<p>Simplify and clarify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle some simple priorities that can be achieved. • Make objectives tight with tangible actions to deliver 	11

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 1: Let the advisory group lead the next step in this regard (not just staff?) 	
Central government commitment is what's missing here. I know why: because it's an election, but commitment to engage within the next 6 months is key. Maybe this is how we get there – can we seek that promise between now and 2/3 Nov meeting? Or better 14 October election.	11
How do you move attitudes within councils to be more open to different ways of doing things. Innovation not fearing failure.	11
The need to explore what is the ideal mix of activities that council should be involved in. A fundamental re-think of what we should deliver eg housing, transport, education etc. And what is the ideal size of the entity needed to deliver such functions?	11
A focus on improving governance and management interface, and in time enhancing talent pool that wants to work in the sector.	10
I believe I could help alleviate some of the anxieties people have around the treaty. I can share good examples of how a Te Tiriti partnership can work in practice. I can also share examples of how business models can help inform how you engage with Māori. I can facilitate courageous conversations	10
Stop thinking and willing that central government is able to solve these issues in local government.	10
Idea: party politics should be removed from councils of all sizes across NZ. We are elected to represent our communities not central government narratives.	10
Central financial support for the regions.	10
Local government's role is too small in NZ – funding, relationships, respect are all compromised by lack of breadth of function. We are too small to really matter to central government.	10
There is no negotiation team here. We talked about LOCAL GOVERNMENT NZ v government roles yet no talk on execution of our plan. What are our priorities 1,2,3,4? What our are “die in the ditch” bottom lines?	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YEM voice. Leveraging what central government are already doing with community providers ie commissioning models, procurement, building community capability (MSD, MPP, MBIE, Te Whatu Ora). Inter-sectional approach. 	9
Change MMP – local government to sit on cabinet or a mayoral senate on all legislation.	9
Alternative shared service arrangements.	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland involvement. No advocacy for what our TA's need for central government can service – health, education, police, Waka Kotahi, welfare etc. 	9
Discussion re EM remuneration – to attract a wider diversity onto councils we need to pay EMs better.	9
I have been in local government for a long period of time. While I admire the thought provoking that this workshop has provided I feel the way forward little different or achievable from my early days of 2004.	8
I am sitting in a room full of people that don't understand money. What it is and where it comes from. When a bank makes a loan it simply creates credit from thin air, central banks create money from nothing also. Governments preside over the money system. This is government's power; the power to create money. They need to step up and help local government meet its challenges and devolve power.	8
We have no 'single' aspiration goal!	7
No clear direction on what we agree should be our functions and be responsible for!	6
Turn localism into super localism to lift advocacy and local voice we give every town (group of towns) with a population over 2500 people their own Mayor/Chair. If things move regional we won't lose the local.	5