

# Te Auaunga (Oakley Creek) Social Evaluation: Social procurement case studies

Dr Adrian Field

Rachael Butler

May 2017



#### Recommended citation

Field, A and Butler, R (2017). Te Auaunga (Oakley Creek) social evaluation: social procurement case studies. Prepared by Dovetail for Auckland Council.

ISBN 978-1-98-852920-2 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-98-852921-9 (PDF)

© 2017 Auckland Council

This publication is provided strictly subject to Auckland Council's copyright and other intellectual property rights (if any) in the publication. Users of the publication may only access, reproduce and use the publication, in a secure digital medium or hard copy, for responsible genuine non-commercial purposes relating to personal, public service or educational purposes, provided that the publication is only ever accurately reproduced and proper attribution of its source, publication date and authorship is attached to any use or reproduction. This publication must not be used in any way for any commercial purpose without the prior written consent of Auckland Council.

Auckland Council does not give any warranty whatsoever, including without limitation, as to the availability, accuracy, completeness, currency or reliability of the information or data (including third party data) made available via the publication and expressly disclaim (to the maximum extent permitted in law) all liability for any damage or loss resulting from your use of, or reliance on the publication or the information and data provided via the publication. The publication, information, and data contained within it are provided on an "as is" basis.

# Contents

<b>1. Summary</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Background to Te Auaunga.....	6
This document .....	7
<b>3. Approach</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Overarching approach and evaluation questions .....	8
Case study methods .....	8
<b>4. Social procurement in context</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Social procurement theory and practice .....	10
Social procurement at Auckland Council .....	13
<b>5. To what extent has the Te Auaunga project applied social procurement practices in its planning, contracting and implementation?</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Overview: Alignment with social procurement practice and policy .....	14
The opportunity of Te Auaunga.....	14
Involving stakeholders .....	17
Procurement processes .....	18
<b>6. What were the enablers and challenges to meeting the social procurement objectives of Te Auaunga?</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Overview: Enablers and challenges .....	21
Enablers and barriers: Youth employment initiative .....	21
Enablers and barriers: Native nursery .....	26
<b>7. What have been the experiences and impacts to date of the Youth Employment and Native Nursery projects?</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Overview: Direct and indirect impacts of the initiatives.....	29
Experiences and impacts: Youth employment initiative.....	29
Experiences and impacts: Native Nursery .....	38
<b>8. Future directions</b> .....	<b>43</b>
What are the lessons for future social procurement practices within Auckland Council? .....	43
How should social procurement initiatives be monitored in the future? .....	47
<b>References</b> .....	<b>49</b>

# 1. Summary

## Introduction

Te Auaunga is a flood mitigation project, based in the Wesley area of Auckland, within the Puketāpapa Local Board. The project, estimated at some \$20 million in value, will undertake extensive park and stream restoration works. The project has involved extensive community engagement on the design and potential benefits of the changes, including with mana whenua, community groups, local board, and schools.

Social procurement is a process for using procurement practice to generate social benefits beyond the products and services required. This report evaluates case studies of two social procurement initiatives under Te Auaunga: a youth employment initiative and a native nursery led by Te Whangai Trust, and based at Wesley Intermediate School. The report explores the experiences, early stage impacts and learning from the youth employment and native nursery projects.

## Approach

The case studies are focused around the following evaluation questions:

1. **To what extent has the Te Auaunga project applied social procurement practices in its planning, contracting and implementation?**
2. **What were the enablers and challenges to meeting the social procurement objectives of Te Auaunga?**
3. **What have been the experiences and impacts to date of the Youth Employment and Native Nursery projects?**
4. **What are the lessons for future social procurement practices in Auckland Council?**
5. **How can social procurement initiatives be monitored in the future?**

The research is based on analysis of literature, documentation, and programme monitoring, along with a series of face-to-face semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with stakeholders between November 2016 and April 2017. Participants included community stakeholders, staff involved in the delivery of the initiatives, trainees, and Auckland Council staff.

## Key findings

A wide range of outcomes have already been identified, beyond the contracted works, despite the early stage of the project's implementation on site:

- 11 young people completed a Level 2 certificate in Multi-Skills Building Construction training programme at Unitec
- Three trainees are employed at Te Auaunga site; a further 2 are working elsewhere with the contractor, and one is working with Te Whangai Trust. Another trainee gained an apprenticeship elsewhere
- The native nursery is required to work with 60 people per year in delivering the plants, planting and plant maintenance contract to Te Auaunga; the trust's work focuses on bringing long-term unemployed and people with mental health/offending history into sustained employment through building work and life skills
- Trainees employed at the nursery report reduced alcohol and other drug use

- The school is reporting improvements in the school roll, reduced vandalism, and a partnership agreement with Te Whangai has reduced their groundkeeping costs.

An unmet expectation, particularly for the young people involved, is that those employed at the Te Auaunga site are not gaining formal construction apprenticeships through their work; this is due to the type of work that takes place on site. The initiative does however meet its intentions of providing local employment and income opportunities.

The procurement approach for Te Auaunga exhibited many of the hallmarks of practice by making use of four key levers for effective social procurement:

- **Policy:** The project leveraged existing council policy in this regard; and there was a strong will among leaders within council to create additional social benefits from the project.
- **Contracts:** Procurement tendering processes and contracting made clear the additional social outcomes sought, and that they were to be achieved without additional cost to council.
- **Market development:** Te Auaunga fostered innovative approaches and partnerships, both through the development of the youth labour force and the establishment of the native nursery, that have potential beyond the project itself.
- **Supplier development:** The contracting process was an important enabler of a social enterprise to be able to expand its offering and provide social value to Te Auaunga through the native nursery, and will also have the potential to supply many other projects in coming years.

Stakeholders highlighted a range of issues that contributed to the success of the initiatives. These included:

- Effective collaboration between the key stakeholders across the initiatives
- Leadership at multiple levels
- Community engagement across both initiatives
- Pastoral support to young people and family/whānau engagement in the youth employment initiative

While very positive about both initiatives, stakeholders reported that the process was not without its challenges. The key issues identified included:

- Young people's engagement in the youth employment initiative was variable at times
- Overall project coordination was challenging given the high level of work and wide range of stakeholders involved
- Time commitment involved for all was extensive
- Managing potential risk/security issues on the school site for the native nursery
- Clarity of contractual obligations in some aspects of the youth employment initiative
- Cost structures managed by the contractor that meant one-on-one supervision would not be possible for the youth trainees at Te Auaunga site; this required adaptation to a different way of working to ensure a safe and productive working environment .

The final sections in this report discuss a range of key lessons for future implementation of social procurement initiatives, and potential monitoring approaches for these case studies.

## 2. Introduction

### Background to Te Auaunga

Te Auaunga (Oakley Creek) \* is a flood mitigation project, based in the Wesley, Mt Roskill area of Auckland, within the Puketāpapa Local Board. The project, estimated at some \$20 million in value, will undertake extensive park and stream restoration works to reduce flooding in the area, provide areas for future housing growth and development upstream, and to improve park visitors' use and experience of the stream and Underwood and Walmsley Parks.<sup>1</sup>

Led by the Puketāpapa Local Board, the project has involved extensive community engagement on the design and the opportunities presented by the project, including with mana whenua, community groups, local board, and schools. The intention is to deliver a range of benefits above and beyond the flood mitigation works, and will include:

- Amenity and recreation improvements such as cycle ways, footpaths and seating; outdoor education space; open play and BBQ/picnic areas; adventure play areas; and fruit tree orchards
- Realising cultural aspirations for mana whenua; engaging students and providing learning opportunities; environmental education; interpretive signage and public/ community art.

Of note, and key relevance to this report, is the inclusion of two social procurement initiatives, involving training and employment of local young people in the project, and establishment of a native nursery social enterprise at Wesley Intermediate School. The key social procurement objectives of Te Auaunga were primarily to ensure social and economic outcomes could be delivered over and above the infrastructural improvements:

- The youth employment initiative involved a multi-skills training certificate offered to approximately 15 local young people, and delivered by Unitec. It also included the provision of mentoring by Global Lighthouse, and drivers' licence training. The initiative was designed to act as a pathway for five local employment/apprenticeship positions on the project (included as a tender requirement, and a means of prototyping council's policy towards social procurement).
- The native nursery involves a partnership between Te Whangai Trust, Auckland Council and Wesley Intermediate School, to deliver the 100,000 native plants required for the project. Te Whangai Trust's business model emphasises training and career pathways for unemployed and underemployed individuals.

The development process for these initiatives was also intended to foster community engagement and buy-in to the works programme, and to support processes of place-making and neighbourhood development in the area.

---

\* Te Auaunga, meaning 'swirling waters' in te reo Māori, was formerly known as Te Auaunga Awa; its name has subsequently been shortened.

## This document

This report explores the experiences, early stage impacts and lessons from the youth employment and native nursery projects. Drawing on documentation and interviews with council staff, contractors, and programme participants, we look at the initial achievements of Te Auaunga against its social objectives for these initiatives, and identify lessons for future social procurement.

This report is structured around the following areas of discussion:

- The approach taken to these case studies
- The context of social procurement initiatives internationally and within Auckland Council
- Key findings from interviews regarding the application of social procurement in the case studies, and the impacts on participants
- Implications for future social procurement practice.

Please note that the two projects that are profiled in this report – the youth employment initiative and the native nursery social enterprise – are to some extent separate initiatives but their development was highly intertwined. Therefore, an integrated narrative is used to explore the way in which the initiatives unfolded; where feasible, the processes, impacts and learning from each initiative are presented separately.

## 3. Approach

### Overarching approach and evaluation questions

These case studies have been undertaken as part of a broader evaluation of the social impacts of Te Auaunga. The more substantive evaluation<sup>2</sup> focuses on such areas as how well the project team has partnered and engaged with key groups throughout the process; and what impacts the project has had on usage of the parks/creek.

These case studies focus on the social procurement process; the implementation of the native nursery and youth employment initiatives; the impacts of the initiatives on participants and stakeholders; and future directions for social procurement practice at Auckland Council on this basis.

An evaluative approach has been undertaken to reflect on the process, successes and learning from the initiatives. The case studies are focused around the following evaluation questions, which also provide the core structure for this report:

1. To what extent has the Te Auaunga project applied social procurement practices in its planning, contracting and implementation?
2. What were the enablers and challenges to meeting the social procurement objectives of Te Auaunga?
3. What have been the experiences and impacts to date of the Youth Employment and Native Nursery projects?
4. What are the lessons for future social procurement practices in Auckland Council?
5. How can social procurement initiatives be monitored in the future?

### Case study methods

A series of face-to-face semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups was conducted with stakeholders from each initiative between November 2016 and April 2017. Participants included Auckland Council staff, community stakeholders, trainees, and staff involved in the delivery of the initiatives.

Interviews with Auckland Council staff explored their role and involvement in Te Auaunga, the process and value of collaboration and community engagement, perceptions of project impacts, and reflections on the social procurement process (including lessons for future practice).

Interviews with training providers at Unitec (a private training establishment, of PTE), staff at Fulton Hogan (construction contractor) and Te Whangai Trust (the native nursery social enterprise), and other stakeholders discussed collaborative and other processes, experiences with trainees, perceptions of project impacts, and the implications for social procurement more widely.

Focus groups with trainees discussed views and experiences of the initiatives, and perceptions of project impacts.



Interviews and groups were undertaken at a range of locations (e.g. participants' workplaces) and were between 30 minutes and two hours in duration. The majority of discussions were recorded and transcribed and a thematic analysis of the data was undertaken.

Table 1 below provides an overview of the sample across each case study.

**Table 1: Sample composition**

<b>Auckland Council (cross-project)</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Healthy Waters; Arts, Community and Events; Procurement; Puketāpapa Local Board; Policy	6 interviews
<b>Youth employment initiative</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Young people in training (pre-construction contract)	1 focus group (7 participants)
Young people in training (post-construction contract)	1 focus group (3 participants)
Auckland Council Youth Connections	2 interviews <sup>*</sup>
Other stakeholders	5 interviews <sup>†</sup>
<b>Native nursery initiative</b>	<b>Number of interviews</b>
Trainees (new and established)	2 focus groups <sup>‡</sup>
Te Whangai Trust staff	2 interviews <sup>§</sup>
Other stakeholders	2 interviews
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4 focus groups 17 interviews N=37 participants</b>

---

\* One interview had two participants.

† One interview had two participants.

‡ One group comprised four participants and the other had three participants.

§ One interview had two participants

## 4. Social procurement in context

This section provides a brief introduction to the social procurement literature including the rationale for taking such an approach, implementation levers, and benefits. An overview of social procurement within Auckland Council is also presented.

### Social procurement theory and practice

#### Social value

Social procurement is a process for ensuring the purchase of goods, services or products generates maximum social value;<sup>3</sup> or put another way, is “the use of strategic procurement practice to generate social benefits beyond the products and services required.”<sup>4</sup>

‘Social value’ is the social benefits of a product or service; a standard procurement practice may of itself deliver social value (through enhancing the availability of infrastructure, services or amenities to a community). Social procurement delivers additional benefits over and above those intended by the services being purchased. It is widely seen to have significant potential for advancing social, environmental, economic and cultural value by supporting the delivery of these outcomes within standard procurement practice.

There are other aspects to social procurement, including procurement of social services directly, and the ethical procurement or socially responsible screening of supply chains. This report focuses on the potential for social procurement to deliver social value, which is of most relevance to the two case studies.

#### Rationale for social procurement

Social procurement, in the sense of deriving social value from procurement practice, has three identified interconnected benefits:

- Delivering best value: Using the economic leverage of purchasing decisions to derive additional social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits at little or no additional cost
- Addressing complex social issues: Applying social procurement approaches to help address social issues such as poverty, disconnection and unemployment
- Fostering innovation and building markets: Bringing about innovations in practice and to develop new markets for goods and services, such as through social enterprise.

Social procurement is often implemented where there is an opportunity to use infrastructural or service procurement to generate targeted employment for a specific population group (including disabled people, youth, long-term unemployed, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, and areas of high deprivation).

Social procurement is well-established in many countries, and has been implemented in many notable infrastructure initiatives, such as Crossrail in London, the Birmingham City Library and in a wide range of public works initiatives in Australia.<sup>4</sup>

In New Zealand, the state sector spends \$30 billion on procurement.<sup>5</sup> Auckland Council, as the largest city in New Zealand, itself spends some \$3 billion annually on procurement (estimated by one interviewee). Applied well, there is clearly potential for social procurement approaches to leverage additional benefits for communities at little or no additional costs to funders. Of note is the forthcoming construction of the City Rail Link, which is expected to require 600 construction workers, and the agency leading the development will require contractors to give apprenticeships and training during the six-year build.\*

### Levers for implementing social procurement

Four key levers are identified for effectively implementing social procurement approaches.<sup>3</sup>

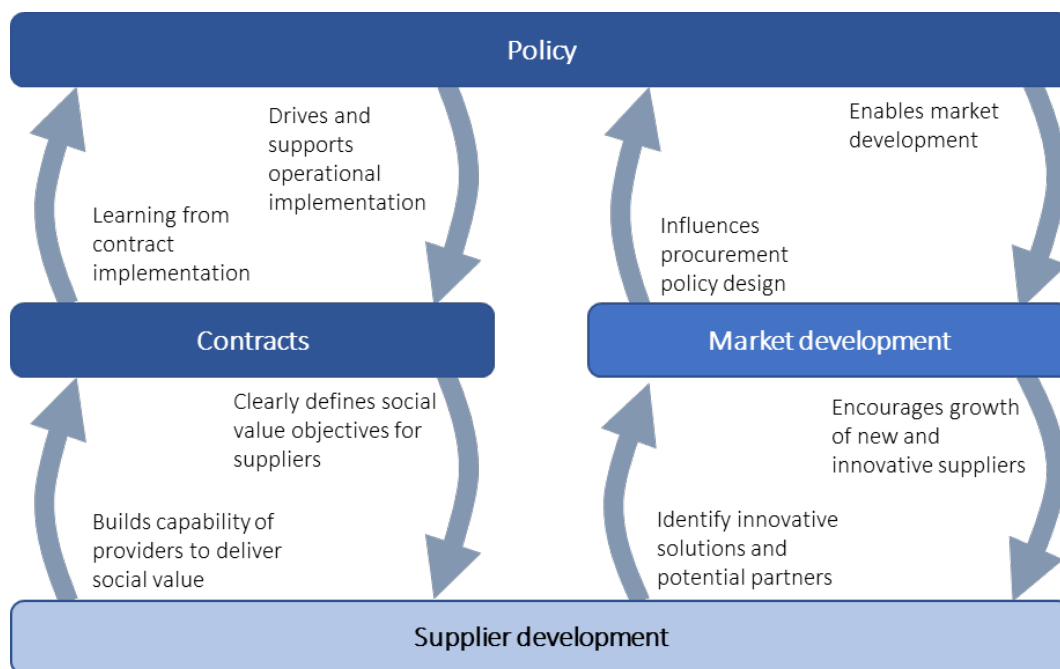
- **Policy:** To provide a framework to drive the operational implementation of social procurement practice
- **Contracts:** To shape the market environment for social procurement and to define the social value that an organisation wishes to generate; this can be via social value clauses in contracts, social value tendering (such as to community and social enterprise sectors that explicitly seek social outcomes through their core activities), or through encouraging partnerships of suppliers to deliver social value
- **Market development:** To build innovative approaches and new supplier markets for procurement; this can often be over a longer timeframe than any individual project, but enables shared expertise and learning to be applied and can ultimately deliver significant economic and social impacts
- **Supplier development:** To support organisations, particularly those in the community or social enterprise sectors, to become fit for purpose to deliver social value through their activities.

These four levers are detailed further in the diagram below.

---

\* <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/328034/city-rail-link-build-to-create-hundreds-of-jobs>

Figure 1: Levers for implementing social procurement



### Potential benefits of social procurement

Identified benefits of social procurement include the following:

- Benefits people and communities (e.g. via improved social outcomes)
- Enhances staff satisfaction and organisational identity, particularly in environments that are often driven by demands of efficiency and/or cost-cutting
- Delivers efficiencies by achieving multiple objectives
- Drives innovation by encouraging new partnerships and service delivery models.

### Challenges for social procurement practice

Despite social procurement's potential benefits, the literature has identified a range of challenges to implementation. These include:

- Governmental culture that is not attuned to such approaches
- Lack of purchaser knowledge of social purpose businesses
- Complexity of measuring and assessing social value
- Limited organisational capacity and lack of experience with public procurement amongst some prospective providers
- Limited capacity amongst social purpose businesses to articulate their social value added.<sup>6</sup>

## Social procurement at Auckland Council

There are already some important foundations in place via both strategy and policy at Auckland Council that support social procurement. In its Procurement Strategy, these include the following:

- A commitment to “generating and recognising social value within the Council procurement processes” by working jointly with community and business groups
- A commitment that “opportunities for social, economic, environmental and cultural interests and outcomes will be actively considered for current and future generations.”
- A mandate to make “use of innovative approaches such as working with social enterprises\*<sup>7</sup>”.

This is supported by the Procurement Policy, which gives mandate for supporting “local impact” and for procurements to “positively benefit local communities where the works, services or supplies are delivered.” Notably, the policy signals that the potential for generating additional local impacts should be considered from an early stage so that they can be incorporated in design and planning. Furthermore, the policy provides guidance that:

- “A collaborative approach could be considered when a community group may have the resources to undertake the work which may result in other intangible benefits such as providing training or work experience”; and
- “Procurement process may include environmental and social specifications for products and services.”<sup>8</sup>

We understand however that to date, the potential for use of social procurement practices is at best latent; whilst the framework is clearly available, there are few initiatives that have grasped the opportunity.

The significance of Te Auaunga is its practical application of social procurement in a substantial area of infrastructural investment, and the lessons it can offer other initiatives.

It should also be noted that at the time of writing, a ‘Smart Procurement’ strategy was under development which we understand will further strengthen the opportunity for social procurement initiatives.

---

\* There are a range of definitions of social enterprise, but it is commonly referred to as a revenue-generating business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to deliver profit to shareholders and owners (see for example <http://www.centreforsocialenterprise.com/what-is-social-enterprise/>).

## 5. To what extent has the Te Auaunga project applied social procurement practices in its planning, contracting and implementation?

### Overview: Alignment with social procurement practice and policy

The procurement approach for Te Auaunga exhibited many of the hallmarks of social procurement practice by making use of all four levers for effective social procurement:

- **Policy:** The project leveraged existing council social procurement policy; it was also clear that there was strong support from key leaders within council to adopt an approach that would support additional social benefits beyond the project itself.
- **Contracts:** Procurement tendering processes and contracting made clear the additional social outcomes sought and that they were to be achieved without additional cost to council.
- **Market development:** Te Auaunga fostered innovative approaches and partnerships, both through the development of the youth labour force and the establishment of the native nursery, that have potential beyond the project itself.
- **Supplier development:** The contracting process was an important enabler of a social enterprise to be able to expand its offering and provide social value to Te Auaunga through the native nursery, and will also have the potential to supply many other projects in coming years.

Although this was not the first social procurement process to be undertaken by council (the Southern Initiative had led some important precedents), there were some notable innovations in Te Auaunga, including:

- Contracts that integrate employment outcomes
- Partnerships with the local board, a private training institute (Unitec), Wesley Intermediate, and the Ministry of Education
- A Memorandum of Understanding to enable 'licence to occupy' school land
- Support from the local board
- Engagement of a social enterprise.

These findings are discussed further in the sections that follow.

### The opportunity of Te Auaunga

#### Social procurement opportunities

As Te Auaunga unfolded, it became clear that there were a range of key opportunities presented by the project. These included:

- Building community engagement and ownership on place-making, realising community aspirations in the process
- Recruiting and training youth from the area as construction workers

- Supporting a social enterprise native nursery with some local employment and local sourcing
- Building the capacity of community organisations to lead in their communities.

Through the procurement process, there was the potential to achieve social and community outcomes at little or no additional cost to ratepayers. The scale of the project, with some \$20 million of investment involved, was an important enabler of innovation.

The project itself was led by the Healthy Waters (previously Stormwater) team within council, which has responsibility for public streams and waterways, including stormwater and flood mitigation projects.

From its inception, this process was strongly collaborative in approach and reached across many groupings within council, including the Puketāpapa Local Board, the procurement team, and Youth Connections (which fosters employment generation for young people in the region), all of which brought complementary skills and resources. The project entailed a considerable development period (some three years) before work began on site in late 2016 and early 2017. Getting to that point required substantial collaborative work across arms of council and in partnership with many different community stakeholders.

The active engagement of the Puketāpapa Local Board, including a resolution they passed on community aspirations, enabled the Arts, Community and Events team's involvement in the project. The Arts, Community and Events team in council approached Healthy Waters to enable realisation of these additional outcomes, and were a highly enthusiastic collaborator in this regard.

The scale of Te Auaunga was seen as an opportunity to do more than business as usual (BAU) contracting, but to work with the community to explore additional outcomes that could be achieved at no additional cost.

Although Te Auaunga could leverage from existing procurement policy, the project's leadership were clear that there was a strong determination to use the project to achieve social outcomes:

*This is the method we do, here's the outcome, which is reduce the flood plain. We get a digger in the stream to dig, to pick axe, or to take the basalt out, that's the methodology. We use social outcomes as part of our methodology to get to that outcome. And it just becomes the norm. It's not a nice to have, it's just the way we do things, and that's what we're moving to achieve. (council)*

*We would have done this regardless just as a good thing to do. It wasn't driven by complying with a council policy, it was driven because it's common sense to do it. (council)*

Such a collaborative approach required a considerable time investment to bring to fruition, in identifying local priorities, bringing stakeholders to the table, and in identifying, managing and mitigating any cost or delivery risks:

*You need to have time upfront, you need to have a multi-disciplinary team, so you need time to assess the options available and the best approach, because there are multiple ways to integrate Youth Employment outcomes. (council)*

## Stakeholder perceptions of the value of Te Auaunga

### *Youth employment initiative*

The youth employment initiative consisted of a Level 2 certificate in Multi-Skill Building Construction delivered by Unitec, alongside additional traffic control and driver licence training. All trainees were provided with equipment (e.g. work boots) at the start of the course, and mentoring support, which was funded by the local board through the Youth Connections initiative. A site visit to the Wynyard Quarter development was also provided as part of the initiative.

External stakeholders involved in the youth employment initiative reported strong support for the project from the outset. It was recognised as an innovative approach that was seen to offer significant potential benefits. For Unitec, for example, its appeal lay in the direct industry link and pathway to employment for graduates, and the partnerships developed with schools through the initiative. The community focus and location of the project was also appealing and, although less of a driver, income generation (e.g. via Tertiary Education Commission funding) and the potential to increase brand awareness in the community were acknowledged. Comments included:

*But actually, working at a community level, I like that. I like the community sense, that we're part of something bigger than students just coming and paying a fee. (PTE)*

*And engaging the local community, community projects, and people who might have just been sitting at home, or on WINZ, or actively seeking a job, and here's an opportunity that comes along, and with all the support mechanisms behind them. That's excellent. (PTE)*

Other stakeholders valued the potential to take a more strategic approach in addressing youth employment and the chance to positively impact on young people's lives. The opportunity to pilot an initiative with the potential to scale and extend the model to other contexts was also appealing. Comments included:

*It has been an opportunity, and I think a really successful one, to disrupt and positively impact on seven, eight kids' lives. (council)*

*I think it's an opportunity to reduce duplication, replication not only within the council system, but also within the wider kind of ecosystem... Youth employment or underemployment doesn't suffer from a lack of funding and there's a multitude of reasons for that. (council)*

### *Native nursery social enterprise*

While the infancy of the native nursery initiative was acknowledged by stakeholders, it was seen to offer benefits to the community. These included employment opportunities for local residents, which were viewed as particularly valuable considering the limited options available within the immediate area.

Locating the nursery within the grounds of Wesley Intermediate was seen to provide a range of potential benefits for the school. For example, stakeholders discussed the falling school roll and the co-location of the nursery's ability to address under-utilisation of the land. The potential employment of family members from the school as an outcome of the initiative was also highlighted. Comments included:



*The whole idea was that if there were jobs created in our community, then more of our families would want to come through our school, and more of our families would want to get the jobs in our community. (community stakeholder)*

*It [Wesley Intermediate] was a really under-utilised community asset ... And so a lot of organisations were saying how can we tap into that, how can we use it? And then the Intermediate school were also saying how can we partner with the community better so our whole community's getting better outcomes, which means our students are getting better outcomes? So when this opportunity for the nursery came along we were able to say, and the school was in a position as well where they were happy for these different kind of innovative options to come about. (community stakeholder)*

## Involving stakeholders

Throughout the project, the Puketāpapa Local Board was an important voice for local interests and drawing together local aspirations, and funded key elements of the youth employment initiative. As the project developed, a range of community stakeholders became involved, including the following:

- Wesley Intermediate, a key partner in the native nursery
- Community organisations, through the establishment of a local community advisory group
- Mana whenua interests
- The PETER Collective\*, a local youth-focused community development grouping.

Interviewees highlighted the importance of involving people with passion and enthusiasm both within council and in the community:

*When you get people that passionate, and that drive, you know it's going to have a good result... If they're driven, you're not just paying them, if there's other motivators, and in this project, I found basically everyone involved has had skin in the game, but it has been more than just money, they've really wanted that good outcome. (council)*

The project also looked to build local capacity; for example, community groups were formally engaged to lead public open days for the project:

*This is really cool because the organisations could bring what they have... like their relationships, the families around them, their ability to do marketing and actually use their skills in another council project... Then they had an open day, and so they got the community, the advisory group guys to pull together a flyer and promote it, and get different groups to come along, and have schools there. (community stakeholder)*

The engagement process revealed a range of aspirations and potential areas for development. Project leadership looked to focus on identifying initiatives that could deliver high impact outcomes. The extensive engagement process settled on two key elements for social procurement: a youth employment initiative, and a native nursery, based at Wesley Intermediate.

---

\* Previously known as Project PETER.

The local board was a powerful enabler for the project through its community representation, and Te Auaunga was seen to align well with the objectives it sought for the community:

*We were saying how can we have a spin off from this project that actually benefits, rather than just the reduction of flooding? Socially and economically how can it benefit the community, and so that led, bit by bit with really good people... These, if you like, technocrats were prepared to say yeah actually it's not just a flooding project, it's a community project. So all of these things sort of were coming together to make this thing work. (community stakeholder)*

Stakeholders for each initiative are detailed in the diagram below, and the initiatives themselves are discussed further in the following sections.

Figure 2: Te Auaunga stakeholders



## Procurement processes

### Youth employment initiative

The youth employment initiative sought to recruit and train local young people to work on the project. For this to occur, it was recognised that a cohort of work-ready young people needed to be developed.

Unitec and the Puketāpapa Local Board became key partners in this initiative. Unitec developed a pre-apprenticeship programme and worked with Auckland Council to recruit young people into the programme. In total, 13 young people were recruited by Auckland Council and its networks, and a further four by Unitec. The training, funded through the Tertiary Education Commission, was key to establishing a work-ready group of young people, which the construction sector proved very willing to tap into in the subsequent tendering phases:

*Because they've developed some skills, already the construction industry is constrained in terms of skill availability. So this is an opportunity where they could develop the skill using the spend through our project, which could help them for resourcing for other projects. So with the experience they develop through this, they're getting those people to develop for their future projects (council)*

Alongside Unitec, the Puketāpapa Local Board were key partners in the youth employment initiative, through their leadership and networks, and via provision of \$20,000 in funding support. This funding enabled the following:

- Driver licencing
- Traffic control training (Level 1)
- Mentoring provision (including transition) through Global Lighthouse, a local community organisation
- Recruitment and marketing
- Equipment (work boots)
- Employer engagement (such as the Wynyard Quarter visit).\*

The investment from the Puketāpapa Local Board was notable in that this was the only substantive additional cost borne by any arm of council; this was critical to the project's approval by the council planning committee overseeing the project.

The youth employment initiative went to tender; a key non-price attribute was the "willing participation" in providing social outcomes, in particular the employment and training of young people in the initiative. All tenderers expressed willingness to work in this way, and four of the five tenderers set out in detail how they would deliver on this requirement. Fulton Hogan was appointed to the project.

### *Native nursery*

The native nursery component of Te Auaunga was devised as a new and innovative way to provide the plants, planting and maintenance needed for Te Auaunga, and in so doing, foster the connection between Wesley Intermediate and the local community. The school was well established in the community but was dealing with a falling roll and had substantial land area that provided opportunities for better utilisation. Establishing a nursery was a way to develop new educational opportunities for students and their families, strengthen the school's ties with the community and create a new community asset.

Te Whangai Trust was approached to lead the development of the native nursery, building on their expertise and presence in this area. Te Whangai Trust is a Miranda-based social enterprise that takes on people with histories of long-term unemployment and/or offending and teaches them work and life skills through horticulture. Its work is designed to support people to reintegrate in employment and training, and into society at large:

*The whole objective is to really connect people with their land, their community, and ultimately get them on that training and employment trajectory. Recognising it's a different journey for different people, so they'll learn a multiple range of skills, life skills, budgeting, driver's license training, English, maths. Whatever they want to identify as a learning priority, they will then be supported and able to learn. (council)*

---

\* Furthermore, at the time of writing, additional funding was anticipated for children's artwork at the native nursery site.

However, bringing this element together took some time, planning and negotiation. The Trust needed a business model and scale of operation to be viable; Te Auaunga alone would not be sufficient to support a viable social enterprise in the area, and a greater level of supply was needed. Council on the other hand needed certainty of delivery from a provider with which it had had no prior contracting engagement.

While these issues were being negotiated, work proceeded to place the nursery in a position to commence, pending successful agreement. This included developing partnership agreements, and securing a licence to occupy the school land through the Ministry of Education. This needed to occur in parallel to agreeing the native nursery with council, otherwise this would have taken some 18 months following the agreement with Te Whangai Trust.

After some time and negotiation, parties agreed sole sourcing contract for plant supply, planting and plant establishment to Te Auaunga project for five years; as well as provision of 20% of Healthy Waters' annual planting requirements for the same period. Council could procure these services in this way as there were no other known providers offering supply of native plants and associated services, and also delivering social outcomes; and together, these were at a comparable price to other market offerings (well within the range of highest and lowest prices on the market). For Te Whangai, this ensured a stable funding source in exchange for goods and service, beyond their existing contracts with WINZ and other agencies:

*Partnerships with people like Auckland Council are vital, they can inject that security into a partnership so you know you can retain good people. You can get outstanding outcomes well beyond your contracted outcomes and then start developing all these add on collaborations and partnerships within the community to really achieve all types of social gain. (provider)*

Although this required some absorption of risk by council, delivery risk issues with council have been mitigated through Te Whangai setting up additional sites around Auckland (four in total) while conversations progressed, providing cover should any site fail to deliver. In addition, payment to Te Whangai is based on the plant supply and plant maintenance, not on the social outcomes per se, but social outcomes are a required deliverable of their work.

## 6. What were the enablers and challenges to meeting the social procurement objectives of Te Auaunga?

### Overview: Enablers and challenges

This section explores what factors supported or challenged the social procurement objectives for the youth employment and native nursery projects.

Stakeholders highlighted a range of issues that contributed to the success of the initiative. In particular, these were:

- Effective collaboration between the key stakeholders across the initiatives to build connections, buy-in and momentum for the projects
- Pastoral support to young people throughout training and afterwards
- Community engagement and readiness for the overall aims of the project and in prioritising needs and approaches
- Whānau engagement, particularly in the training programme.

While very positive about both initiatives, stakeholders reported that the process was not without its challenges. The key issues identified included:

- Young people's engagement was variable at times in the youth employment initiative
- Project coordination was challenging given the high level of work and wide range of stakeholders involved
- Time commitment involved for all was extensive across both initiatives
- Managing potential risk/security issues on the school site for the native nursery
- Cost structures managed by the contractor that meant one-on-one supervision would not be possible for the three youth trainees at the Te Auaunga site; this required adaptation to a different way of working on-site to ensure a working environment that was both safe and productive.

### Enablers and barriers: Youth employment initiative

#### Enablers of success

A range of enablers were identified that were key to the success of the initiative: effective collaboration, pastoral support, community engagement, and whānau engagement. Taken together, these enablers suggest that simply a requirement in tendering documents for youth employment outcomes will not of itself deliver the outcomes desired (and may set up the initiatives for failure). The importance of multi-faceted support throughout the process to ensure engagement and retention of young people participating, particularly those from vulnerable populations.

**Effective collaboration:** Effective collaboration between the key stakeholders was seen to play a key role in the success of the initiative. Interviewees reported that there were strong relationships

established between the main collaborators that developed over the course of the work. This was facilitated by regular communication and support, alongside strong commitment by all parties involved:

*[Council staff member] was very obliging, very helpful – he couldn't do enough for the programme. And [mentor] was the same. They were always just a phone call away. Which is something that we don't necessarily get involved with in the mainstream students. (PTE)*

*That's where we're lucky I think with an employer like Fulton Hogan who has made a commitment both at the regional level with the pledge partnership, but also on the ground. (council)*

The value of the community advisory group (CAG) was highlighted by one interviewee as an effective collaborative forum. As evident in the feedback below, it had provided valuable support during the initiative, particularly given the range of stakeholders involved:

*I mean we have an amazing CAG team ... the support from them is amazing. So if I need anything, I'll just ask [council staff member]. If there's anything with the students I'll talk to Fulton Hogan, and if there's anything with, you know got to do with the mentoring, then I talk to Youth Connections. So I'm pretty much protected and supported by these groups. (provider)*

**Pastoral support:** The additional support provided to the trainees as part of the overall initiative was highlighted as playing a crucial role in facilitating student engagement, including their longer-term involvement in the programme. In particular, the mentors were seen to provide important pastoral support; this was considered especially important due to the “disadvantaged” nature of the student group, and in situations where they did not have wider family backing:

*I think the pastoral side of it, where [mentor] was able to take care of any of their issues, which were outside of the classroom, whether it was family, home life, attendance, of course, she was great to just phone up and say I haven't seen them for a couple of days. And she'd soon get onto them. Her task was to ensure that the environment outside of Unitec was one which was enabling. So, it enabled them to partake of this programme, rather than become overwhelming to the detriment of their attendance. (PTE)*

*The fact that they're [mentors] respected within the community, and they're part of. So for the youth and for the family and whānau it's alongside rather than being done to. And for a lot of the kids that we're trying to reach out to in the community they get a lot of that done to, by council, by Government agencies, by whoever. So that's critical. (council)*

One stakeholder also spoke about the additional pastoral support that had been provided by the employer:

*Clearly it's worked really well, as well as pastoral support that we get through Global, is the support from the employer ... His [Fulton Hogan staff member] role is to engage the community ... I see him as being close to the pastoral support for the trainees. He checks in with them frequently and, you know he gives updates. But he also updates us on how they're getting on, so I think that's been quite a bonus that you might not always get with an employer. (council)*

**Community engagement:** An important finding of this research was the value of the considerable time investment from all parties. Ultimately, these not only enabled the youth employment and native nursery projects to be established, but the level of community participation and buy-in through the process was a key enabler of subsequent approvals. This built on a base of strong local networks that existed well before Te Auaunga, that identified local priorities around training and employment and a willingness to collaborate in this area.

The engagement and involvement of the wider community in the youth training initiative (and broader stormwater project) was seen to be “critical”. This included other community stakeholders/providers (e.g. the PETER Collective, the local board) as well as the public:

*I think when we're talking about collaboration with the local community organisations, I was just thinking it's necessary. I wouldn't even think of it as a benefit, I think it was absolutely critical. (council)*

*My first instinct was okay let's make sure there's a strong relationship with the community has been established. And making sure that they've consulted the community and letting them know what's happening. Cos with community, once they see new things happening it's almost like to some people it can be a threat. To some people it can be, the whole thing, oh here we go with another project happening and no one's consulting with us. (provider)*

Community engagement was considered important both at the development and setup phases, as well as during the delivery of the programme. For, example, when recruiting young people to the initiative, one interviewee highlighted the role that other community stakeholders played in disseminating information. As evident in the extract below, it was believed that their standing in the local area meant that the information was better received than if it had come direct from Auckland Council:

*I've got stakeholder lists of everyone, and there's organisations like Project PETER, they were instrumental in pushing out to the groups in the area. And people like [mentors], without them it's council coming in. (council)*

Notably, when the project required resource consent, the scale of support (including written support from the local board and other stakeholders) was seen to expedite the commissioners' agreement. Further, the contractor on site noted that the level of community willingness to tolerate the noise and disruption of the initiative is noticeably higher than other projects they have been engaged in. This does suggest that the extensive communications and engagement have supported the subsequent implementation:

*This project with all the community stuff that's gone on around it... It's been amazing, getting proactively approached by say [council], and invited along to a meeting with a school. Or getting supported in those meetings with schools, or just knowing quite a few of the people that I've met through the community groups all live around here. And they've all got a connection, so you can say, hey [mentor] we're getting some graffiti, what do you reckon we should do? And she's like I'll put the word out to leave you alone, and we haven't had as much. (contractor)*

**Whānau engagement:** Several stakeholders highlighted the importance of whānau engagement as a key influence in determining the success of the initiative. This was both in terms of recruitment of young people, as well as their ongoing support during the programme. One interviewee observed, for example, that in cases where family members did not see value in the employment initiative, this could create difficulties for the student. Comments included:

*So [mentors] have the relationships not just with the young people, but with family and whānau which is absolutely critical. (council)*

### Challenges to implementation

**Young people's engagement:** It was recognised that some students had previous negative experiences of education and/or other personal challenges and therefore struggled with attendance at the Unitec course. This had impacts both for Unitec and the mentors providing support:

*Trying to get the students to be responsible for turning up, responsible for their own actions, that was interesting. Just letting them find their own way, and letting them stand or fall on their own volition ... Attendance for some of them was a struggle. They saw no benefit, or monetary benefit for turning up on time, and staying all day. (PTE)*

*Working with young people, you've just got to keep motivating them. It's the follow up and the chasing... that was a challenge. And the whole thing of just keep encouraging them and it's more about just showing them the bigger picture. (provider)*

As part of this, the initial attrition of students from the Unitec course was highlighted, with stakeholders noting that four students left early in the programme. It was reported that these students were recruited by Unitec and therefore not present at the information evening where applicants and families were given background on the programme and support during recruitment. In addition, one stakeholder reported that some students may have enrolled on the course to maintain their benefits, even though they did not view it as being an appropriate course for them. Comments included:

*So there's the training programme that Unitec deliver and they had space for I think 18, but then there's the wider programme that includes Global, that includes the visits ... And that got a bit muddled at times because they [Unitec] filled the spaces, which I can completely understand they don't want to waste the spaces on the training programme. But I'm not sure those young people ever were part of what I would call the wider programme, and wouldn't necessarily have seen that context. (council)*

Outside of the course itself, it was also reported that some young people required additional support to stay engaged, considering their sometimes difficult family backgrounds, and/or other personal issues they were facing. Although challenging, this does highlight the importance of the preparatory training that the course offered to support subsequent employment.

*I mean our challenge was more of just working with the young people from different backgrounds. And, we didn't only deal with students, we dealt with young people who came with a lot of baggage... and just making sure that everyone else understood. Like we had to*



*liaise with Fulton Hogan, and Te Whangai, and everyone that's involved, letting them know guys ... it's not the same old student that you get at university with a great upbringing. You know these young kids have some personal issues that we need to take into consideration. (provider)*

A further point of feedback from the contractor was the need to be better able to understand the background of some employees (with employee consent), so as to be able to better manage physical or mental health issues that may arise:

*If somebody does have a parole officer, or mental health issues, or anything like that, we could find out from them, with their permission. But we could get some contact details and some support so we can help them. (contractor)*

**Project coordination:** While it was reported that the key collaborators in the initiative generally worked well together, coordinating all parties involved within the required timeframes was sometimes a challenge. Specific issues raised included the time taken to establish new relationships, identifying the right people to work with, and working alongside partners operating within different timetables:

*So by the time we got to the right person, it was like 'oh wow' we've only got two weeks to start referring people. (council)*

*You can't stop a council development or contract and time it right for the school calendar, but a lot of them were saying you know what, if you'd have come to me in December I probably could've given you another. But they're now doing something else, or they're half way through their school year. (council)*

It was for these and other reasons that some interviewees felt the project would have benefited from clearer project coordination or a lead point of contact to maintain oversight of the overall initiative.

**Time commitment:** The time commitment and level of work involved in establishing the initiative was seen to be substantial. One stakeholder, for example, reported that there were a high number of meetings and other obligations which needed to be managed in the context of other work commitments. However, as evident in the extract below, it was anticipated that the lessons gained as part of this initial programme would streamline processes for future initiatives:

*I mean there has been a time resource cost on my part, which is part of my job. But I see that as something that could be for if you did this again elsewhere. If we did it again a lot of that time would be saved because you've done it already.... Whereas you're kind of piloting at this stage, so it does take time and a lot of discussion. (PTE)*

**Cost structures:** From Fulton Hogan's perspective, there was strong support in principle for the youth employment initiative. However, some unanticipated challenges arose in implementing the initiative. A key issue was the cost structures for the contractor; to implement the contracted requirements for three young people on-site meant that the three graduates were working under the direct supervision of the project manager and the machine operators, rather than the usual process of having a more experienced person working alongside each of them.

This demanded a higher level of supervision than anticipated and was challenging for all. It was generally thought that the graduates were settling into the work after the initial challenges. Interviewees suggested a more flexible contracting approach that would enable rotating employment between the main site and other sites, and closer one-on-one supervision, would be better with future initiatives. The experience of Ta Auaunga suggests that the deployment and work/training arrangements of trainees/employees should be carefully considered and negotiated between council and contractors, to ensure that the intended outcomes of any initiative can be delivered appropriately, and which meets the needs of all parties.

## Enablers and barriers: Native nursery

The native nursery is at an earlier stage of development. At the time of writing, Te Whangai had established its nursery employing their staff (including one graduate from the Unitec course) and there are plans to offer horticulture education for school students, community events, and community vegetable gardens. They are contracted to work with 60 people each year and also to provide three collaborative projects with community organisations each year.

### Enablers of success

**Effective collaboration:** It was reported that there had been some strong collaborative practice during the set-up of the native nursery. The open and respectful communication between collaborators was highlighted as a contributing to the success of the partnerships developed, alongside the aligned visions of those involved:

*I think the council's willingness to actually hear people's feedback. What [mentors] have done in those meetings ... I think it's just the idea that everyone's opinion matters, whether or not all the ideas are used or not, different model, but at the end of the day there's always room to hear people here. (community stakeholder)*

*And it was a pretty good match; they [Te Whangai] don't give up on people, we don't give up on our kids, they don't, you know, they don't believe that the current system is working, and neither do we, so that's why we're trying other ways of doing things. (community stakeholder)*

Interviewees spoke about the important role that the PETER Collective had played in facilitating the development of the native nursery. This had provided an overarching framework for a more coordinated response, an effective platform for the dissemination of information, and a trusted base from which relationships could develop:

*We have 12 organisations that sit around the table. And to find the time to collaborate and build a relationship with 12 other organisations is quite a big ask for any one organisation or individual. But if they can build a relationship and trust with one common one, which is Project PETER ... And they know that they can trust the organisations, they can trust Project*

*PETER ... They can trust the decisions that are being made, then they can trust who's associated with that. (community stakeholder)*

*So, like getting even eight organisations, or eight managerial/CEO level type people in a room from our community, to regularly meet once a month. We had [council staff] come and present at those meetings quite often... It was a much easier way to then go back to our independent organisations, and disseminate information, or to activate people. Out of every single one of those meetings, I had a set of tasks to go and pitch to my board, and I knew exactly what to do. (community stakeholder)*

**Advocacy:** The role that some individuals played in advocating on behalf of different stakeholders was highlighted by one interviewee as having played an important part in the set-up of the native nursery. This was particularly valuable when relationships were in the early stages of development, with some participants providing recommendations for less well known stakeholders. As evident in the extract below, this had help to facilitate the formation of new partnerships:

*The team were really, really hesitant to back them because... who knows if they're really going to deliver, it's a big contract, it's an important contract. And it was actually through some random meeting with [council staff member] that she was able to convince the right people that Te Whangai Trust was a reputable organisation. That then shifted their whole perspective or their whole perception of them. (community stakeholder)*

### Challenges to implementation

**Risk management:** Earlier sections noted the possible risks from a council perspective, but there were also issues to be dealt with from a community perspective. Given the location of the native nursery within the school, potential risks to the students, the land, and the overall school needed to be considered. These included health and safety, the Vulnerable Children's Act, and possible environmental impacts.

Aside from addressing these via application of the usual safeguards (e.g. no-one from the sex offenders register is allowed to work on the site) the reputation of the partners involved (i.e. Te Whangai) was equally important:

*We did discuss what happens if Te Whangai didn't match our community; it's a significant risk to take. So what we did, we went down and visited [Te Whangai staff]. And we started that sort of relationship-building conversation a year and a half ago... It was 'let's get to know these people, let's get to understand their philosophy and align that with our school's vision'. (community stakeholder)*

One interviewee also highlighted that the council's risk-averse approach sometimes created difficulties, particularly during the initial stage of development:

*The fact that it was a first for Auckland Council provided heaps of challenges. Because rightly so it's so risk averse, as an organisation, and there was this constant, almost like a distrust of the community. You know are they really gonna deliver on what they say they're going to do? Are they going to do it to the right quality? What's going to happen if like everything is*

*so risk averse and so risk managed to the point that they almost manage them out of doing anything? And so that was a challenge, that was a constant challenge. (community stakeholder)*

While these were fundamental aspects that needed to be worked through, with some stakeholders requiring additional assurances, it was reported that they did not pose an insurmountable challenge:

*The health and safety and vulnerable children stuff came through from the Ministry and some Board members. And so that took a bit of convincing to show evidence of that, to show processes, to have a memorandum of understanding that encompassed that. (community stakeholder)*

**Time commitment:** It was acknowledged that the time commitment and level of work in establishing the native nursery had been significant. One stakeholder noted that this was particularly challenging during the initial set-up and scoping phase, with many meetings and presentations involved, alongside the development of associated paperwork. Added to this, it was reported that this often incorporated a new skill set for some stakeholders:

*It's the set-up phase; it's the conversations, it's the board meetings, it's the pitches, the development of documents, MOUs, all to get something across the line, and once it's across the line, everyone's happy and hunky dory, but. I don't actually think people in education really are trained in it... So, what am I saying here, the time to first understand how we can be successful, and setting up the plan to do it, then secondly, the actual time commitment to carry it out. (community stakeholder)*

**Project coordination:** As with the youth employment programme, the need for a project coordination role was identified by one interviewee, due to the high level of work involved and the need to maintain oversight and organisation of all stakeholders engaged in the initiative:

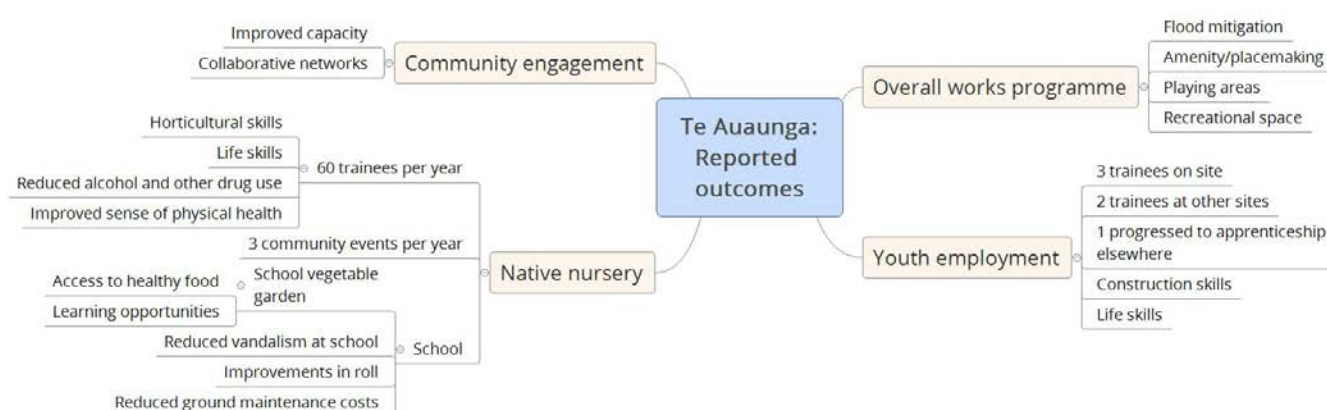
*We're learning more and more that collaboration needs coordination... No one has the time to that sort of stuff but we're finding, and starting to prove, that when someone does have the time to do that stuff, and has the skill to do it, it can actually be quite awesome (community stakeholder)*

## 7. What have been the experiences and impacts to date of the Youth Employment and Native Nursery projects?

### Overview: Direct and indirect impacts of the initiatives

This section explores the reported outcomes of the initiatives to date, and the impact in the local communities. The figure below summarises early stage outcomes reported by youth participants and stakeholders.\*

Figure 3: Reported Outcomes



Some expectations were not met; in particular, the youth employment roles on site were not formal trade apprenticeships, as initially envisaged (however, there were some advantages that were also discussed). Other feedback related to the perceived mismatch between the training provided at Unitec and the skills required on the job, with trainees anticipating that the roles would involve construction work.

### Experiences and impacts: Youth employment initiative

#### Pathways into training and employment to date

Figure 4 on the following page details the outcomes to date for training and employment, following enrolment in the Unitec pre-apprenticeship course. In total, 17 were initially recruited; 13 by Auckland Council and its networks and four by Unitec. By the conclusion of the course in December 2016, 11 remained, all of whom were from the Auckland Council cohort (the loss of the four Unitec-recruited students is discussed in another section).

Among the 11 graduates, four are New Zealand European, one is Māori, five are Pasifika, and one is 'other' ethnicity. All were aged 18-23 years at time of entry, with seven of these aged 20 years or under. As indicated in Table 2 below, most of the trainees were from the Roskill/Mt Albert areas and surrounding suburbs. All employed by Fulton Hogan were from these areas. Approximately 70% were male and 30% were female. The two Auckland Council recruits that did not complete were both male.

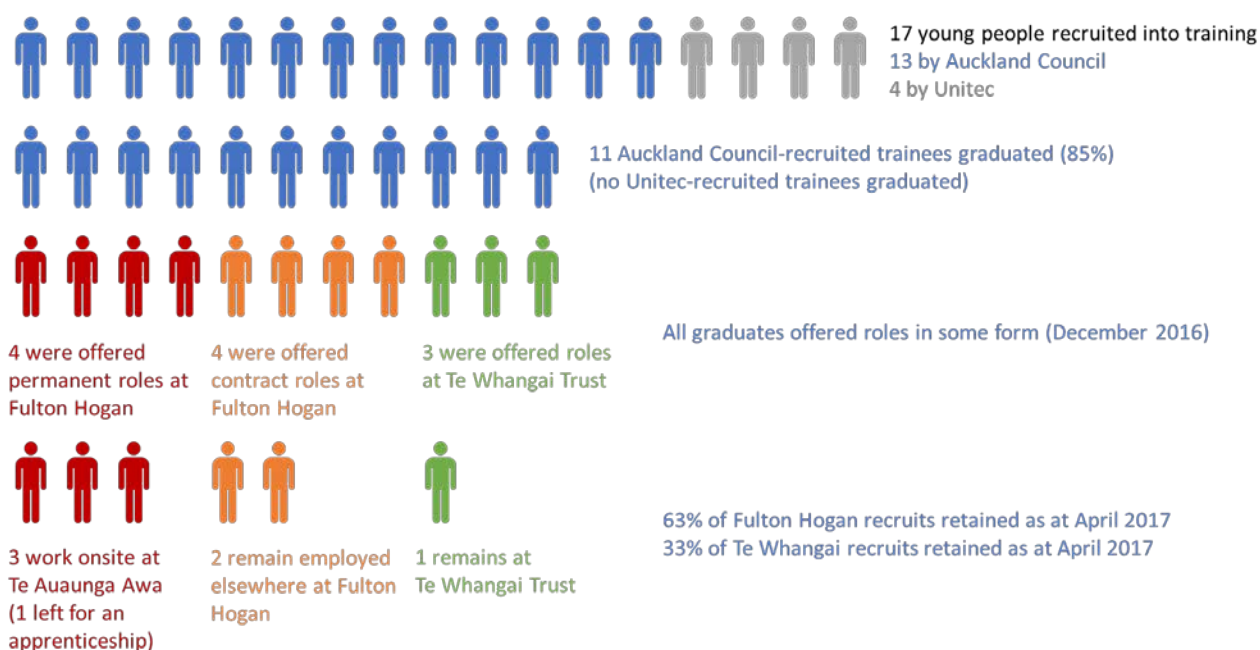
\* Note that the number of Te Whangai trainees (60) are contracted per year to be recruited, rather than reported to date.

Table 2: Suburbs of residence, and gender of Unitec youth employment trainees, and employment/training outcomes

Suburb	Female	Male	Total	Outcomes – Employment offer	Te Whangai Trust programme
Avondale		2	2	2	
Hillsborough		1	1	1	
Kingsland		1	1	1	
Mt Albert	1		1		1
Mt Roskill	1	3	4	2	1
New Windsor	1		1	1	
Point Chevalier		1	1		
Sandringham		1	1	1	
Snells Beach	1		1		1
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>		

Following graduation, four were offered permanent contracts with the successful tenderer, and four were offered casual contracts. As at April 2017, three are employed onsite by Fulton Hogan. Of the four offered contract roles, two remain with the company, and one has taken on another apprenticeship elsewhere. The remaining three graduates were referred to Te Whangai, and one remains there.

Figure 4: Te Auaunga youth employment progress (April 2017)



Our understanding from feedback from stakeholder interviewees is that the 63% retention rate among those employed by Fulton Hogan (albeit at an early stage) is well within industry standard. We also note that the property/construction industry overall had a turnover rate (all ages) of 27% in 2015;<sup>9</sup> at face value, this retention rate seems positive to date. One interviewee also highlighted that they had anticipated that some young people may find aspects of employment challenging:

*But I count that as a success because that's the whole point. You know, if they were all ready for employment we could question whether they were the right young people, like ready and*

*just go and that's it, and fly, then maybe they weren't all the right sort of cohort of young people. (council)*

At the time of writing (March-May 2017), the native nursery was only in its early stages of operation. The nursery is required to work with 60 trainees per year; as at April 2017 seven trainees are on the programme, with a further seven due to start shortly. Six of the trainees are from the Puketāpapa Local Board Area. Furthermore, a local resident with a strong Wesley connection has been appointed as Nursery Manager, with another local resident employed as a team lead.

### Youth participant experiences – Youth employment initiative

An initial focus group (n=7 participants) was held with youth trainees towards the end of the training programme and shortly after they had completed interviews with Fulton Hogan. This explored their experiences with, and views of, the programme, including initial motivations for enrolling and expectations following completion of the Unitec Certificate in Multi-Skill Building Construction.

#### *Motivations for enrolling*

The trainees had found out about the initiative from a range of sources, including careers teachers and family members. One participant was already studying at Unitec and transferred to the Auckland Council programme. They reported a range of reasons for enrolling, including a general interest in the construction industry, the opportunity to try out a potential vocation, and the possibility of employment at the conclusion of the training programme. One viewed it as an “escape” from school, while others were motivated by the lack of costs attached to the programme (e.g. “get a free licence”) and the fact that it was located close to where they lived. Comments included:

*Just to broaden my knowledge, and see where I wanted to go after this, what direction I want to go in. (trainee)*

*Left school to come and do this course. Saw it as a better opportunity. School wasn't cutting it for me... I was real keen to leave, a bit lost as well. (trainee)*

*Most courses, you're not sure if you're going to get a job or not. I guess the fact that there was a high chance of us getting a job just means more for me. (trainee)*

*Oh, I was looking to get like a restricted licence, so I can just like get some more work, and then like stumbled across one of Unitec's like multi-skill, free thing, get free licence. I was like, sure, why not? (trainee)*

All were aware of the links to the Te Auaunga project and, for some, its location within their community was important. This was seen to offer practical advantages (e.g. less travel time) as well as a sense of connection to the work being undertaken.

At the time of the initial discussion with trainees, they had recently found out that some of the Fulton Hogan contracts would involve roles on other sites. Some expressed disappointment at this

as they had been looking forward to working at the Te Auaunga site and they anticipated that the other roles may not be as close to where they lived. Others, however, were less concerned:

*Still be happy for a job. (trainee)*

*It didn't make a major difference, but I did think that it did sound fun to do that sort of project. (trainee)*

### *Experience of the training programme*

Trainees were broadly positive about their experience of the programme, describing it as “fun” and “a lot better than school”. Of note, they valued the range of learning opportunities on offer and the practical nature of the Unitec course. Other positive aspects highlighted included the Auckland Council assistance (e.g. provision of gear), the site visits, and the teaching staff.

Comments included:

*Interesting learning, like new stuff every day. (trainee)*

*He [Unitec staff] is just a good teacher - explains things well, goes at a good pace. (trainee)*

*It's good, hands on learning. Get to use the tools, know the names of them. (trainee)*

Further specific aspects of the programme were explored with trainees, with key findings detailed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Experiences of the youth employment initiative**

Programme component	Key findings	Example comments
Site visit to the Wynyard Quarter development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site visit was widely enjoyed by students, and seen to be both informative and motivating.</li> <li>Key benefits included insights gained into the industry, knowledge of how large sites operate, and the opportunity to interact with project managers.</li> </ul>	<p><i>I saw that as like inspiring I guess, hearing from different people that they started from the bottom.</i></p> <p><i>The way they make it sound, and just how the industry is going to be like booming for the next 10 or so years and stuff, just sounds good.</i></p>
Practical assistance (e.g. provision of work boots/glasses and transport)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The provision of equipment and transport was widely appreciated.</li> <li>Some trainees predicted they would not have made it to the visits without transport assistance, and others reported they may not have been able to afford the necessary gear.</li> </ul>	<p><i>We needed the gear to get inside the workshops. Didn't have it lying around at home.... Saved a lot, well saved us having to spend a lot of money for it.</i></p> <p><i>If they told me I had to get there on my own, I probably wouldn't show up.</i></p>
Traffic Control training leading to a Level 1 qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The traffic control training was seen to provide useful skills.</li> <li>Some viewed it as being overly theoretical (“boring”) and sought a stronger practical component.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Just the fact that it was interesting, like a whole new respect for, respect for the people, cos you drive around and see roadworks, and you don't really see all the stuff behind it, before they get to that stage.</i></p> <p><i>I was just expecting a bit more practical, but it was still good.</i></p>



Driver Licence training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While appreciated by trainees, the perceived limited scope of the driver licence training was viewed as a negative (“only get two sessions”).</li> <li>• One trainee felt that it was designed for people who already had a level of driving experience.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Way more, just need way more lessons. Like lessons from the start.</i></p> <p><i>I think the way they’re doing the training is they’re expecting us to already know, have done quite a bit of driving.</i></p>
Community advisory group meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainees were positive about their attendance at the community advisory group meeting, reporting that it was both interesting and motivating.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Oh, it was awesome. Got to meet people that’s supporting us, and showed us the changes and their plans. Just maybe keen to try harder, just seeing those plans, and meeting those people out there.</i></p>
Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentors were reported as having provided a range of support (e.g. informing trainees about course requirements)</li> <li>• Some trainees also liked the more social aspects of mentor support (e.g. food/barbecue)</li> <li>• It was reported that there had been some communication issues with mentors (e.g. meetings changed at short notice and some planned events not going ahead).</li> </ul>	<p><i>They are good people... They shout food and stuff.</i></p> <p><i>Like one of the first outings they were doing was like the paintball, and they never followed through.</i></p>

### Follow up with youth trainees employed on site

A follow-up focus group was held with three of the youth trainees who had secured permanent contracts with Fulton Hogan at the Te Auaunga site\*. This explored their experiences working at the site, and how well it met expectations prior to taking on the roles.

The trainees highlighted several key benefits to date:

- Ongoing (practical) learning on the job
- Receiving a regular pay packet, and the associated benefits of this. For example, all reported that they had purchased a car since starting their contract, and some spoke about being able to help out their family financially by paying board
- Access to further training (e.g. First Aid and traffic courses).

Comments included:

*I mean it’s kind of nice not having to worry about stuff like homework and all of that, but the fact that we’re still learning, that’s actually useful... And we’re getting paid for it. At school you’re learning a whole lot of stuff that you’re not going to use, and you’re not getting paid for it. (trainee)*

---

\* Attempts were also made to interview trainees who left the programme. However, these were not successful.

*Never knew what it was like just having your own money and doing whatever... Used to be lucky if you saw a fifty. (trainee)*

They compared their situation with the other youth trainees who were working within Fulton Hogan's general staff pool, and felt that it offered several advantages. These included access to a higher pay rates, less travel time and distance to get to work, and associated cost-saving (e.g. petrol). They indicated that it would have been difficult to get to a different site due to a lack of transport options (none owned a car prior to their Fulton Hogan role), and that they would have been disappointed if their initial expectations of securing work at the Te Auaunga site had not been met:

*We would have been stuffed cos I wouldn't have been able to get to Mount Wellington. (trainee)*

*And the whole reason I took the course was to work there [Te Auaunga site] cos that's what it was originally for, to work on this project. (trainee)*

It was reported that the programme mentors had maintained contact with them since starting their Fulton Hogan contracts, mainly via texts. There had also been attempts to arrange a barbecue but this had not gone ahead. Feedback from trainees indicated mixed views of the ongoing support provided:

*I don't mind the texts, it does kind of seem pointless well for us at least. We've been here four months, still going hard, and the way she says it 'oh hang in there, keep going' makes it sound like we're all trying to give up. (trainee)*

*I was a little keen [for the barbecue]. Just like catching up with everyone else... and the food. (trainee)*

The trainees reported that Fulton Hogan staff who had been involved with their interviews at Unitec sometimes checked in to see how they were going, and their comments indicated that this was appreciated:

*He'll see me around and he's always like 'hey, how's it going?' And [Fulton Hogan staff member] does the same, like they were the ones who did all the interviews, met us at Unitec...It's quite nice, to be honest. Take a few minutes of the day just to actually stop and chill, just have a chat. (trainee)*

Day-to-day challenges of the role included the long hours and the physical (and repetitive) nature of the work, which sometimes left the trainees feeling tired. They also discussed their low status in the workplace and indicated that managing relationships with colleagues was sometimes difficult. Comments included:

*Waking up early as. Like you don't have much time you know to do other things, socially. (trainee)*

*The fact that like every other part just like outside of work, like things I like to enjoy are just, aren't enjoying them now, cos I'm like tired. So yeah that sucks. (trainee)*

*Sometimes it's difficult to deal with people... Being at the bottom of the food chain I guess. (trainee)*

At a broader level, there were some issues raised regarding initial expectations of the employment not being met; in particular, the lack of lack of apprenticeships on offer, which had been an expected outcome of their involvement in the training initiative. There was therefore some disappointment expressed that this did not go ahead, with one of the focus group participants noting that there was a lack of a career path in their current roles (*"It's not really like leading anywhere"*). This was acknowledged by Fulton Hogan staff, who indicated the work at Te Auaunga site does not lend itself to apprenticeships, unlike other parts of the business. There is however scope for the trainees to progress to machine operator roles, contingent on getting their full driver's licences. Looking ahead, this suggests that the type of role that an initiative may be able offer should be carefully identified, so that communications, course content and expectations line up appropriately.

Other feedback related to the perceived mismatch between the training provided at Unitec and the skills required on the job (i.e. gaining building skills that had not been required on site).

Comments included:

*Mostly building and carpentry [on the course] bit of drain laying, concreting, building walls, welding, all that sort of stuff. But we've done none of that here. (trainee)*

*I thought we were going to be doing carpentry kind of stuff. (trainee)*

*It did say in the thing, like when my mum even showed me the course, like outline or whatever, talking about the end of it, it said at the end you'd be getting like an apprenticeship and stuff... This was nowhere near an apprenticeship, it's proper actual fulltime work. (trainee)*

Overall, however, they were generally positive about the impact of the employment initiative on their lives, and differentiated their current situation from what they might have been doing otherwise:

*Just sitting at home and doing nothing. (trainee)*

*Looking for a job. (trainee)*

*Yeah, chill job somewhere, like take kind of like year to just relax after school, 13 years of school, just chill, and then maybe look at getting somewhere next year. (trainee)*

### **Impacts from the perspectives of community stakeholders**

Most interviews with community stakeholders for the youth employment initiative were undertaken towards the end of 2016, before the end of the Unitec course and prior to the commencement of the Fulton Hogan contracts. Emerging impacts outlined below should, therefore, be considered in the context of this timing.

**Community engagement:** Stakeholders reported that the youth training initiative and broader Te Auaunga project had been successful in engendering a high level of community support, resulting in a sense of connection and pride to the work being undertaken amongst local residents:

*What it's done, and what it will do once it's complete is give the community a place to land. And you know there's been a significant amount of buy-in and pride around that project... So I think that's a significant outcome, again for a geographic area that doesn't get the same air time as others. (council)*

There had also been knock-on effects for young people living in the community who had not engaged in the initial employment programme:

*It did give the wider community, the wider young people, local young people, just another hope. And think 'of I they could do it, I could do it too'. And they keep asking me 'when is the next course at Unitec?' (provider)*

As reported earlier in this report, a wide range of stakeholders were seen to have played a role in this outcome. In terms of engaging the broader community (who may not be aware of the youth employment initiative) the regularity of Fulton Hogan's communications highlighting developments in the stormwater project was also viewed as making an important contribution:

*We get weekly updates, and then we get to share it to the schools, and to the parents on what's happening. So I think that's the difference, they feel real important, or valued about like 'oh okay, so this project's ours'. So they have an input, which is great, man Fulton Hogan, they're amazing. (provider)*

**Establishment of collaborative networks:** As discussed earlier in this document, the establishment of effective collaborative networks was seen to have facilitated the success of the youth employment initiative. It was also viewed as a key outcome of the work, with reports of strong relationships having been formed between stakeholders. This included the key partners in the programme, as well as broader participants:

*The strong partnership with Auckland Council and their complete support coming through... Having the local board get in behind it, that there was political engagement all the way through. (PTE)*

**Youth development:** Stakeholders reported that some young people involved in the initiative had shown personal development across a range of domains. These included increased confidence, improved work ethic, and improved motivation with regard to future goals:

*I think it's just seeing their personal growth... A lot of them come across very unsure of themselves, very unsure of what they want to do, where they're going in life ... so just giving them a sense that they can do it, and making it at their level ... And building their confidence. (PTE)*

Their sense of accomplishment as a result of participating in a project, and gaining employment, within their own community was highlighted by some stakeholders. This included recognition of their personal achievements within their own families:

*They're amazing students and they were so proud of themselves and you know they completed the course at Unitec. But it was more about... working in your local community, fixing something for your community is like a big thing for young people. (provider)*

*They were going back into their communities, and then particularly into their families, and for a lot of them they were the first ones to actually have achieved any academic record within their wider family. And so, for some of them, they were role models for their siblings. (PTE)*

It was acknowledged by one interviewee that even if a youth trainee did not access employment at the conclusion of the programme, there would have likely been some beneficial impacts on their life:

*The other thing is that we can get really, really focused as I know we have done on this project around how many go into a job, how many are actually in the job. I think there would be some really interesting and powerful insights out of those that didn't complete, because ... exposure to it will still have had an impact on that youth's context, and that's kind of important as well. If that youth then went and decided to study, I don't know, origami or whatever, if that was a pivotal moment that meant that that youth made another decision, that was the right decision for them. That's still a positive outcome. (council)*

**Youth employment:** The employment of eight trainees as a result of the initiative was highlighted as an important outcome (see earlier section for further details on this) and seen to exceed initial expectations:

*I mean it has gone above and beyond that really. I mean there's eight positions of employment that are on the table, you know, that we've got offered to the young people. That's more than we thought. (council)*

Some interviewees felt it was important to also acknowledge the outcomes for young people who did not get offered a contract, or for whom the Fulton Hogan role did not work out, but who were offered roles at the native nursery project. This was seen to be important both in terms of the availability of alternative pathways for those with different needs, as well as the value of having inter-connected projects:

*You know out of eight people you'd expect not all of them to struggle, cos some just need the opportunity to fly. But some probably would, so that cushion, or that net, if you like of having Te Whangai here, is part of what can be really successful for the programme. So I know that there's at least two that have, I think are currently volunteering over there. (council)*

**Development of replicable model:** The learning from the youth employment initiative, and broader Te Auaunga social procurement project, was viewed as a valuable outcome by community stakeholders. The potential to transfer this to other contexts was seen to offer significant potential:

*Being able to have a model that we can use in a completely different... this can be lifted and put into a completely different area of work. (council)*

## Experiences and impacts: Native Nursery

### Trainee impacts

Two focus groups were held with Te Whangai trainees, as follows:

- **One group of established trainees:** This included a mix of volunteers and Te Whangai staff who had all completed the original training programme. At the time of the research they were working across a range of Te Whangai sites (e.g. Miranda, Waiuku).
- **One group of new trainees:** This included trainees who had recently been inducted to the training programme and were working on the native nursery at the Wesley Intermediate site.

Findings from the focus groups are presented together below as many of the issues raised, and experiences discussed, were similar across both groups of trainees. Where differences were identified, this is highlighted in the relevant sections of the text.

### *Introduction to the training programme*

Many of the trainees had come from a background of long-term unemployment. For some, therefore, it had been a struggle at the beginning of the training programme due to the lifestyle adjustments required (e.g. early morning starts to get on site). Others recalled that they had felt nervous about starting the training, particularly given the limited information they had received from WINZ, as they were unsure what to expect. Comments included:

*I'm enjoying, I didn't like it when I first come. It was a bit of a struggle when I first came, it was hard to get out of bed at seven when you're so used to getting up all hours in the afternoon. And some of us were stuck on the benefit. (trainee)*

*Oh just found it hard to slow down the drinking to begin with, but now it's way better, save your drinking for the weekend. (trainee)*

The new trainees reported that it had not taken long to overcome their initial nervousness, primarily due to the warm welcome they had received and the supportive working environment. One indicated that they had felt settled “on the first day”. Other comments included:

*I felt anxious, due to personal problems. But after the first couple of days I sort of came right. (trainee)*

*They are very very tight this group. When you walk into this group, it's like you've known each other forever. Because everybody takes you as you are. (trainee)*

Additional factors that had facilitated their continuation with the training programme were the transport provided to the site (“It makes a huge difference, we don't have to worry about where we are going to find our fares”) and, for one trainee, the fact that the native nursery was located within their neighbourhood.

### *Views of the training programme*

All focus group participants reported that they enjoyed the work associated with the training. For some, working outside or “in nature” was enjoyable, whereas others valued the social aspects of the work:

*I like being outdoors – can’t be inside a factory or anything, that would drive me nuts.  
(trainee)*

*I am enjoying it – it’s getting out of the house. (trainee)*

*We’ll buddy each other along, and help each other along. We really enjoy this kind of work.  
(trainee)*

The supportive environment at Te Whangai (including at the native nursery site at Wesley Intermediate) was a key theme discussed by the trainees; this was both in relation to the work being undertaken as well as pastoral support provided by other colleagues/trainees and the broader organisation. One focus group participant, for example, reported that he had received extended time off from the role when a family member was ill. Others indicated that staff were encouraging in relation to their work performance, and also understanding of personal challenges that they were facing. This was seen to differentiate the training from other programmes that some trainees had attended and struggled to complete. Comments included:

*It’s like a whanau-oriented trust. And when you’re down there’s always somebody picking you up. And when times are hard it’s good to know that you’ve got other people that are willing to go that extra mile to help you out. (trainee)*

*They pick you up when you’re down and stuff like that. You get it wrong, they let you know.  
(trainee)*

While all trainees were very positive about their experience of the training programme, they acknowledged that they sometimes faced challenges. Those reported included the physical demands of the work, some of the technical learning required for the job, and managing personal issues so that they did not interfere with their work attendance and performance. Some trainees also indicated that they missed time spent with their whānau given that they were away from home all day.

### *Project impacts*

Both the established and new trainees reported a range of positive impacts as a result of the engaging with the programme. These included:

- **Knowledge and skill development:** e.g. “You are learning every day, learning different things, names of plants and stuff like that”.
- **Development of personal relationships:** e.g. “These people they boost your morale from the minute you get into the van. If you are feeling down it doesn’t take them long to get you back up. It’s quite a pushy crowd but they do it with the good intentions”.
- **Satisfaction from teaching and helping other trainees:** e.g. “You show people how to do it properly and it makes you feel good cos they’re actually learning stuff.”

- **Personal development:** e.g. *“All the [uplifting] speeches and everything, it actually got me up and expressing myself”.*
- **Access to further training opportunities (e.g. Level one and two horticultural qualifications):** e.g. *“Actually they’re the only qualifications I’ve got at the moment, so quite proud of it”.*
- **General lifestyle improvements: e.g.** *“It was a struggle getting out of bed – couldn’t even be bothered to put shoes and socks on. Now I’ve shoes and socks on and a jersey! It’s made an amazing difference for me. I’m doing this for a good cause – been sick of being on the benefit for a long time. It’s time to up my game”.*
- **A reduction in alcohol and other drug use:** e.g. *“Personally for me, it’s getting off the drugs and booze. That’s been a hell of a positive for me. It’s getting away from a group of people who I’ve known for many years, who’ve done the same thing.”*
- **Improved physical health:** e.g. *“You were twice the size when you came, look how much weight he’s lost, he’s fit and healthy”.*

Some trainees indicated that they felt more motivated since attending the training, and had begun to develop plans for what they would do when it finished. These included finding work, undertaking further training in the horticultural field, and volunteering at the native nursery:

*Going into the workforce. I’ve never had experience of a job. This is the first course that I’ve been with that I’ve ever lasted on. Four weeks is a long time for me – normally two weeks and I’m finished. I’m making sure I’m going to succeed for what I’m aiming for – to get a job. (trainee)*

*If I didn’t have the place here I would still be at home wondering how I was going to get a job, so big thumbs up for that. (trainee)*

### Impacts from the perspectives of community stakeholders

The timing of the research meant that interviews with stakeholders connected to the native nursery were undertaken early in the development of the initiative. Reported impacts were therefore at an initial stage, with some interviewees anticipating that these would extend over time. The main emerging impacts identified included:

- Community engagement
- Establishment of collaborative networks
- Youth and whānau development
- School-based impacts.

**Community engagement:** Stakeholders reported that there had been high levels of interest in the native nursery. Particularly given its visible location within the school grounds, some interviewees highlighted that members of the local community often dropped in and were keen to find out more about the work being undertaken:

*We’ve had a few people coming up and saying ‘what’s going on, why are there fences in the school?’... And curious, really curious... We’re getting all these Somalians coming through and Muslim community and it’s like they’re coming into a world that they don’t even know. (provider)*



As evident in the interview extract below, it was reported that the school community had responded positively to the initiative and saw the potential both for the local area and their own children:

*Most of them [parents] when they come through and they see what the nursery's doing, they see as it a way for us to give back to the community, but also to give their kids an opportunity. So, they like it. We haven't had a single negative. Not a single parent's gone, oh, some derogative comment about low socio-economic people in training programmes.  
(community stakeholder)*

**Establishment of collaborative networks:** As with the youth employment initiative, a key outcome of the native nursery to date had been the establishment of collaborative networks. This included the strengthening of existing stakeholder relationships as well as the development of new connections.

**Youth and whānau development:** While still at an early stage, the project was associated with some emerging impacts for young people and their whānau. One stakeholder spoke about a potential arts project which was being discussed (but was not confirmed) at the time of the interview. This was to involve children's art displayed along the fence which had been erected as part of the native nursery and was viewed as an exciting off-shoot of the initiative:

*I mean, the whole idea of about a fence being built was amazing, but then to put our kids' artwork on there, on the outside of that fence, to show off our children's amazing creativity, I think that just shows that the council's right behind it, it just gives me lots of hope, you know.  
(community stakeholder)*

The introduction of a community garden in conjunction with Te Whangai was also seen to offer benefits both for the children and their whānau. This included learning about diet and science, as well as potential health impacts:

*We've got a community garden, so grow your own veges, cook it in our cooking room, parents having conversations with their children about diet, healthy eating, children learning about horticulture, science in there... And, a no brainer, like they've [Te Whangai] got the soil, they've got the expertise, and we've got the kids who are keen to do it. (community stakeholder)*

As can be observed in the extract above, it was recognised that some of the impacts for youth in the area may not be realised immediately but may emerge further down the track:

*More than the delivery of the education of the children a go. We're looking at employment, we're looking at, oh inspiring kids, like we're not just worried about maths, reading and writing. I think also the idea that what we're actually doing may, it's not immediately making that impact on the life of that child directly, but maybe three or four years down the road, if any one of our kids wants to get a job here, you know. (community stakeholder)*

Related to this, interviewees from Te Whangai Trust made clear their view of the value of their work in reducing reoffending and imprisonment, and offering a path to stable employment for their trainees.

**School-based impacts:** A wide range of impacts specifically related to Wesley Intermediate were identified in the evaluation. As a result of the native nursery being on site, and the construction of a fence, it was reported that there had been a noticeable reduction in vandalism within the school. Financial benefits had also been realised due to the income generated by payment for the land use and savings on some school maintenance costs. Comments included:

*There's so many really proactive things that are coming out of it. We used to have a big vandalism problem here, so having that fence was a big selling card to the Board.  
(community stakeholder)*

*Secondly, you've got all the financial stuff that come through, so we make money out of Te Whangai being on site, we get offset with our lawn mowing costs, landscaping, trees. Tree falls over, they clean it up. (community stakeholder)*

At a broader level, one interviewee highlighted that it communicated positive growth and development within the school, and that involvement with the native nursery and Te Auaunga project had increased its profile within the community. As a result, there was a sense that public perceptions of the intermediate school had improved:

*When there's things being built, in any organisation, it's a sign of growth and development and change... To me, it's indicative of the inward change. Us showing off our children's artwork is something that I don't think we've ever done before, we're a sports school.  
(community stakeholder)*

*One thing that our school band did at the end of last year is we went and played at the launch of, breaking ground with Fulton Hogan... But also our name just kept on popping up again and again, 'oh Wesley Intermediate's working with this organisation to do this, blah, blah, blah'. And it's just like, man, it's just so good to have our school, which was running down, 108 kids, now at the centre of something that's really beneficial for our community, environmentally, economically, with the jobs ... If that's an overarching sort of return on investment for our involvement, I know you can't quantify it right now, but public image for me has been a huge, huge benefit. (community stakeholder)*

## 8. Future directions

### What are the lessons for future social procurement practices within Auckland Council?

Te Auaunga is widely seen as an important exemplar of social procurement in practice. The two initiatives within Te Auaunga highlight the potential applying social procurement approaches, which were seen by many stakeholders as substantially untapped by council.

In many respects, the two case studies offer good examples of prototyping – the creation of new ways of working within a system to achieve better outcomes, and which ultimately can support change in the system itself. At this point, social procurement is not business as usual, but offers an important exemplar to support a shift to social procurement as a core approach of council activity.

In this final section, we review the findings of the Te Auaunga case study, and previous work in this space<sup>3</sup>, to identify potential directions for social procurement's development within Auckland Council.

#### Success factors

A key feature of Te Auaunga was the **early integration of social procurement across the life of project**, from design to commissioning to delivery. Te Auaunga was conceived with the intention to deliver community outcomes beyond its core mandate for flooding mitigation; bringing these to fruition was undertaken across all stages of the project, and not simply as an add-on at the procurement stage.

This meant that the initial planning, community engagement, design and implementation could identify the social procurement priorities for the project, and create mechanisms for implementation, including pastoral support for trainees, and agreements with the school and Ministry of Education. A simply contractual clause on its own would not have achieved the outcomes of the project.

The ability of Te Auaunga to **focus on and prioritise** a single issue, in this case youth employment, enabled opportunities to be identified and activated. These built on some years of local advocacy on the issue and meant that there were willing community champions for, and participants in, the project. This also enables procurement to define the outcomes it seeks and measure the local impacts.

**Engagement, communication and coordination** between Council, community interests and the different suppliers (such as Unitec, Te Whangai Trust and Fulton Hogan) created opportunities for collaboration and innovative solutions to emerge. The Te Auaunga experience suggests that in the future, clear coordination roles would be useful for similar initiatives, alongside communication of the greater specificity of outcomes that can be expected (for example, employment versus apprenticeships).

The **culture, commitment and champions** that emerged within Te Auaunga mean that different forms of leadership could flourish at multiple levels – in the enabling environment set by senior

management; in the flexible and engaged approach taken in project design, implementation and management; and in community leadership through Auckland Council and the Puketāpapa Local Board.

The shared commitment across arms of council, community and suppliers meant that each brought their own resources, networks and skills to the project, and to create positive social outcomes through the two initiatives. To some extent, the two case studies exhibited elements of collective impact approaches, with each supporting the agreed goals of the initiatives and bringing their own value to the project. Clarity on the role of each member of the governance table and what they were bringing to the project, was seen as pivotal to a strong working relationship and an enabler of progress.

Te Auaunga was an important exemplar of **aligning supply and demand**, by building community and supplier readiness. Some market entrants may not be at a level of capacity to offer a viable product under normal contracting processes; but the case of the native nursery social enterprise highlights the opportunity to look beyond the confines of the project at hand to create opportunities for social providers that may have longer-lasting social value. Alongside this, the active engagement of Wesley Intermediate as a local partner, and the negotiations with the Ministry of Education, meant that once agreement was reached on the form of the native nursery social enterprise, the nursery would have a physical space to occupy.

Te Auaunga set clear parameters to **measure, monitor and evaluate social value**. At a procurement level, a small set of context-specific indicators were clearly defined and incorporated in contracting, for subsequent monitoring. A broader set of indicators and assessment tools can be applied in parallel evaluation processes, where these are required (a suggested suite of monitoring tools and indicators are suggested in the final section of this document).

An initiative such as Te Auaunga, where new approaches are being applied and tested, requires effective **procurement capacity** to navigate policies, systems and processes. In these initiatives, the procurement team were an important and valued partner in the procurement process. Furthermore, taking a different approach often entails risk; the initiatives highlight the acknowledgement of risk and the willingness within council to absorb and manage this to deliver outcomes that may not have been achieved otherwise. Maintaining conversations over risk, and not treating it as an unmoveable barrier, enabled agreement and progress to be made.

### Enablers

A range of key foundations, or enablers for the success of Te Auaunga can also be identified for future initiatives. A major factor was the **investment in time**. The process of building community buy-in, prioritising outcomes, developing the training programme at Unitec, and negotiating the relationship with Te Whangai Trust and the education sector all took time. This did however support implementation later in the process and built a solid platform of community support and alignment with community aspirations.

While time intensive, Te Auaunga and other initiatives within council have created precedents and processes that should ensure greater **ease of replication**.

The **scale** of the project lent itself to leveraging greater social outcomes; and future initiatives should consider the realistic outcomes that can be expected from the scale of each project.

Auckland Council's **policy that supports social value contracting** creates the enabling environment, which in these case studies supported the design and implementation of each initiative.

The **multi-disciplinary teams** within council, community and providers brought a range of skills and resources to the project. Alongside this, the **continuity of staff and relationships**, particularly within council, supported managing the complexity of relationships, contracting, engagement in Te Auaunga.

### Social procurement road map

Building on the findings of this review, and the key directions discussed above, the diagram on the following page sets out a road map of key elements for social procurement initiatives in the future. It includes eight stages of development, which based on Te Auaunga, offer directions for future initiatives to consider:

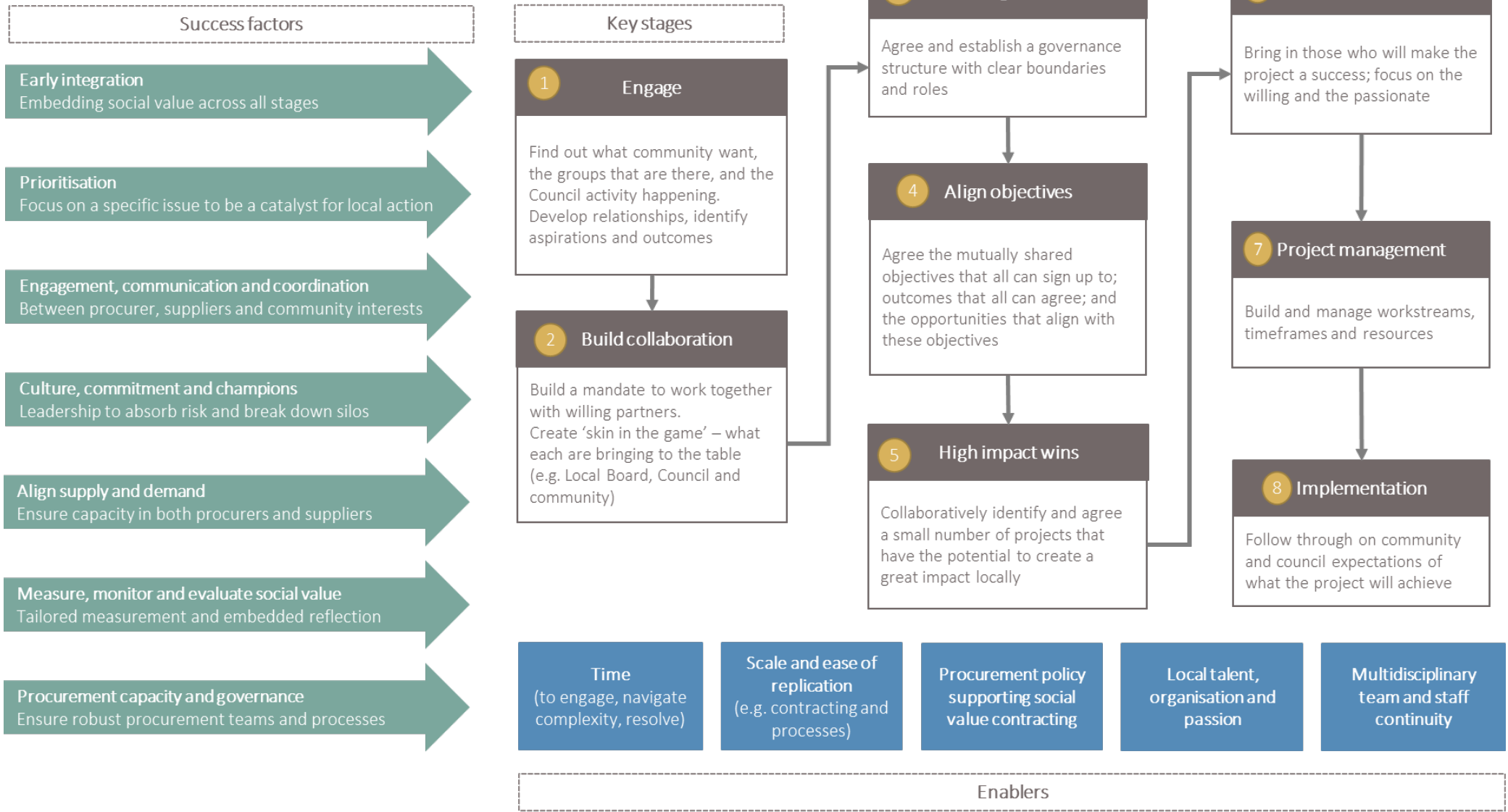
1. **Engagement** with community and council interests on activities and aspirations
2. **Collaboration** with willing partners
3. Establishing clear **governance**, boundaries, roles
4. **Aligning objectives** between parties and identifying opportunities
5. Agreeing **high impact wins** that will support community aspirations
6. Bringing in **delivery partners** who can deliver on the agreed outcomes
7. Robust **project management**
8. **Implementation** to deliver the project's success

### Potential areas for future development

Looking ahead, some areas for potential further development in social project, which are suggested in interviews and the literature<sup>6</sup> include the following:

- Procurement from indigenous businesses; this has been established in Australia and supports the growth of indigenous business models.
- 'Lotting' of procured services into smaller parts that give greater support to SME involvement
- Building collaborative models to support social enterprise in the market
- Educating staff about social procurement and social purpose businesses
- Involving suppliers in contract design, where appropriate
- Supporting social purpose businesses' access to finance.

# Social procurement road map (learning from Te Auaunga)



## How should social procurement initiatives be monitored in the future?

Our brief review of the literature indicates that monitoring outcomes of social procurement activities is an evolving process, and there are not clear standards in place currently. The outcomes that should be measured are not fixed, and depend on the context and objectives of each project.

However, the social value required by social procurement contracts, as these initiatives exemplify, should be small in number, clearly articulated and able to be easily monitored for delivery.

With specific regard to Te Auaunga, key outcomes of interest for monitoring are detailed in the tables below, and may be considered for other initiatives.

Table 4: Youth employment – potential indicators

Indicator	Purpose	Collection
Number of young people in training	Monitoring	Monitoring data; including age, ethnicity and area of residence
Number of young people graduating	Monitoring	Monitoring data; including age, ethnicity, area of residence, and subject areas of training
Course satisfaction	Engagement	Survey; including age, ethnicity, area of residence, and subject areas of training
Number of young people offered employment/apprenticeship roles	Social value contracting	Reporting against contract; include time in position, turnover, and reasons for departures (if this occurs)
Personal outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of personal confidence/ hope for the future</li> <li>• Personal goals</li> <li>• Lifestyle changes</li> <li>• Value of employment</li> </ul>	Outcomes monitoring	Survey; including age, ethnicity, area of residence (if feasible, requires further research into possible questions)

Table 5: Native nursery – potential indicators

Indicator	Purpose	Collection
Number of people in training	Social value contracting	Monitoring data; including age, ethnicity and area of residence
Number of people completing training	Monitoring	Monitoring data; including age, ethnicity, area of residence, and subject areas of training
Referrals to programme from participants	Engagement	Monitoring data
Outcomes following training (where applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Further training</li> <li>• Reoffending (if applicable)</li> </ul>	Outcomes monitoring	Provider follow-up; including age, ethnicity, area of residence, and subject areas of training
Personal outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of personal confidence/ hope for the future</li> <li>• Personal goals</li> <li>• Lifestyle changes</li> <li>• Value of employment</li> </ul>	Outcomes monitoring	Surveys, including age, ethnicity, area of residence (if feasible; requires further research into possible questions)



## References

- <sup>1</sup> Auckland Council. 2016. Social Evaluation Plan: Te Auaunga Storm Water Project. Auckland Council: Research and Evaluation Unit.
- <sup>2</sup> Allpress, J A (2016). Te Auaunga (Oakley Creek) social evaluation: Report 1 – engagement. Auckland Council technical report, TR2016/041
- <sup>3</sup> Synergia and Community Economic Development NZ. 2012. *Social Procurement Briefing Document* (Report for Auckland Council). Auckland: Synergia Ltd.
- <sup>4</sup> Social Procurement Australasia. 2016. *Social Procurement: The Business Case*. Social Procurement Australasia.
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.procurement.govt.nz/procurement/for-suppliers/working-with-government/the-new-zealand-government-market>
- <sup>6</sup> Barraket J, Weissman J. 2009. *Social Procurement and its Implications for Social Enterprise*. Brisbane: Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies.
- <sup>7</sup> Auckland Council. 2013. *Procurement Strategy*. Auckland: Auckland Council.
- <sup>8</sup> Auckland Council. 2013. *Procurement Policy*. Auckland: Auckland Council.
- <sup>9</sup> Lawson Williams Ltd. 2016. *The New Zealand Staff Turnover Survey – Summary Report*. Wellington: Human Resource Institute of New Zealand.



**Find out more:** phone 09 301 0101 or visit  
[aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) and [knowledgeauckland.org.nz](http://knowledgeauckland.org.nz)