

Relationship Dynamics in New Zealand Territorial Authorities

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Abstract

Local governments play a key role in servicing communities and progressing their interests. Elected officials and hired staff both play crucial roles in local government and their relationships can significantly affect the character of council operations. These relationships have not been subjected to any significant academic examination in the New Zealand setting and this thesis addresses this void by examining the different relationship structures which exist within New Zealand territorial authorities.

This report combines international research, the theoretical components that have been previously explored in New Zealand, and the actual experiences of elected officials and senior managers. Primary research is grounded on prominent relationship models and typologies, all of which have different foci and consequently complement each other. The most prominent model is the Politics/Administration Dichotomy, which is argued to have been established in the late 1890s/early 1900s. This refers to a strict separation of the political and administrative realms, which are divided into the stewardship of elected officials and council management. The Complementarity Model, promoted by James Svara, is used as a counterpart to the dichotomy. This model is based on the premise that elected officials and bureaucrats join together in the mutual pursuit of good governance. While the model recognises their distinct roles, backgrounds and perspectives, it highlights the integration resulting from the interdependence, reciprocal influence and overlapping functions. In order to analyse the position of New Zealand territorial authorities within academic models and typologies, primary research includes both a nationwide survey and a closer analysis of four case studies.

Results suggest that varying views exist regarding whether the separation of staff and councillors is based on their respective roles or inputs. A role-based separation would emphasise distinct 'realms', with councillors controlling policy-making and staff controlling the implementation of policy. This approach supports a hegemonic relationship and can be seen to embody the Politics/Administration Dichotomy. Alternatively, an input-based separation would emphasise the issues that each group should focus on, with councillors integrating community desires and staff incorporating their technical expertise. This idea lends itself to interactive processes and is consistent with Svara's Complementarity Model. Neither the input nor role based relationship foundations are inherently superior; with various empirical factors influencing the suitability of each relationship structure. However, there needs to be an explicit understanding around the nature of relationships for councils to function to their full potential. Furthermore, choices of relationship structure need to include a deliberate evaluation of how different values will be strengthened and weakened by each approach.

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Abbreviations

CCO	Council Controlled Organisation
CCTO	Council Controlled Trading Organisation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
LGA	Local Government Act 2002
NPM	New Public Management
PAD	Politics/Administration Dichotomy
U.Di.T.E	Federation of Local Government Chief Executives

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Local government plays a significant role in everybody's lives by providing indispensable services, ensuring the smooth operation of civic systems, and developing vibrant environments. These responsibilities are undertaken on behalf of local communities, who elect representatives to oversee governmental operations and ensure their interests are the key driver. In addition to representatives, councils employ staff to provide technical expertise and implement policy. While this basic structure is common and relatively simple, relationships between the two groups can differ considerably. These relationships have not been explored to any significant extent in the New Zealand context and this study attempts to address the void by examining the use of different relationship structures between and within councils. The differing functions and values of each group mean that variances in their relationship can result in changes in the operational approaches of local government. The values, inputs, and precise roles of elected officials and council staff are not homogeneous and differ between and within countries. Presently, these issues are under-researched within the New Zealand context and are consequently also addressed in this study.

1.2 Research Context

The New Zealand local government structure is established in the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 and Local Electoral Act 2001. Under this system, councillors are elected by a community (either a whole administrative area or a particular ward) to govern territorial authorities. Councillors then employ a single staff member, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to administer policy, provide advice, and manage council operations. Two key responsibilities of the CEO are to employ the staff and act as an intermediary between the staff and councillors. This council-manager form is an internationally common structure for local government (Cheyne, 2004; Drage, 2008; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). Section 39(e) of the LGA is particularly significant for this thesis, setting a governance principle that: "a local authority should ensure that the relationship between elected members and management of the local authority is effective and understood". The existing body of academic literature on relationships within New Zealand

local government is limited, although valuable work has been done on the roles of councillors by authors including Howell (1995), Forgie (1999), Cheyne (2002, 2004, 2009), McDermott (1999), and Drage (2008), as well as on the structure of local government by Thomas and Memon (2005, 2007). This report examines this work in Chapter 4 in order to aid the analysis of research results and to ensure that international trends and theories are considered in an appropriate manner.

The structure of local government in New Zealand is predominantly established in the LGA. This divides local government into two tiers, regional and territorial. Due to research restraints, this report focuses on territorial authorities in order to limit the scope and avoid organisational differences from affecting the coherence of results. Territorial authorities focus on land use management, community development, as well as a range of other issues. However, New Zealand's local government holds fewer responsibilities than almost all other nations in the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2009).

1.3 Theoretical Background

In order to establish a clear and useful direction for the study, an examination of past and present international theory is undertaken in Chapter 2. This includes considering a range of relationship models and typologies in order to ensure that all the key aspects are taken into account. Particular attention is given to work by Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman; Peters; and Mouritzen and Svava. These authors consider the relationship between elected officials and bureaucrats from different perspectives and can consequently be used in complementary manner. However, the key theoretical debate surrounds the Politics/Administration Dichotomy (PAD), which has been discussed for over 100 years and is a key focus of the theoretical background. PAD reflects a complete separation between the political, policy-making realm of elected officials and the administration of policy by staff. The two driving principles behind PAD are protection of staff from political interference and the democratic control of government services (Aberbach, Putnam, & Rockman, 1981; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Zhang & Feiock, 2010). The evaluation of PAD is paralleled by analysing the Complementarity Model, a new paradigm heavily promoted by James Svava. This model is based on high levels of interaction between elected officials and staff, who work within shared processes while maintaining their respective inputs and levels of authority. The body of existing literature is used to reflect on the important aspects in local government relationship, which include

influence, roles, inputs, values, and organisational structure. These aspects are then analysed further and contribute to the development of the research aim and objectives.

1.4 Research Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim of this research is to analyse the different relationship dynamics involved in the development and implementation of policy for New Zealand territorial authorities.

To achieve this aim, three specific objectives have been developed:

Objective 1: To analyse the variety of relationship structures operating within New Zealand territorial authorities.

This objective looks to examine and analyse the structure of relationships. This includes considering statutory requirements, but predominantly involves researching the various formal and informal processes in which councillor-staff interactions take place. These processes are expected to have significant implications for the nature of council relations.

Objective 2: To evaluate the inputs, roles, and role perceptions of councillors and council staff in decision-making processes.

This objective involves considering both the statutory framework and the informal factors that influence inputs, roles, and role perceptions. These aspects all affect the relationship dynamics between councillors and staff, particularly if each group holds differing perceptions.

Objective 3: To evaluate the degree and manner in which decision-making by councillors and council staff reflect different values.

This objective aims to analyse how the roles and power balances between councillors and staff reflect underlying social values. This includes considering how trends in the relationships result from, or impact on, changing desires and expectations towards local government operations. A particular focus is placed on the balance between efficiency and integrating aspects of the public good (including equality, representation, accountability, and public control).

1.5 Research Strategy and Structure

This chapter has introduced the topic, research context, theoretical foundations, and the aim and objectives. In addition to setting the research aim and objectives, the theoretical background in Chapter 2 is also used to optimise the research methodology and ensure results contribute to existing bodies of knowledge. Chapter 3 then discusses the methodological approach that has been taken to produce relevant and valuable results. First, it evaluates what information is desired in order to build on current knowledge in a manner which supports a pertinent and productive discussion on the research aim and key objectives. After this, the chapter discusses the particular approaches taken to obtain this information. These include a nationwide survey of councillors and senior management, as well as interviews at four case study councils. This approach allows for both a broad evaluation of current situations in councils (despite large variations) and a detailed analysis which gives an understanding of the broader, quantitative research. Chapter 4 expands on the research context by discussing the structure and nature of New Zealand local government. This is followed by the presentation and analysis of research results in Chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 7 concludes the research with a summary of findings as well as comments on theory and future research.

Figure 1.1 below presents the structure of this report.

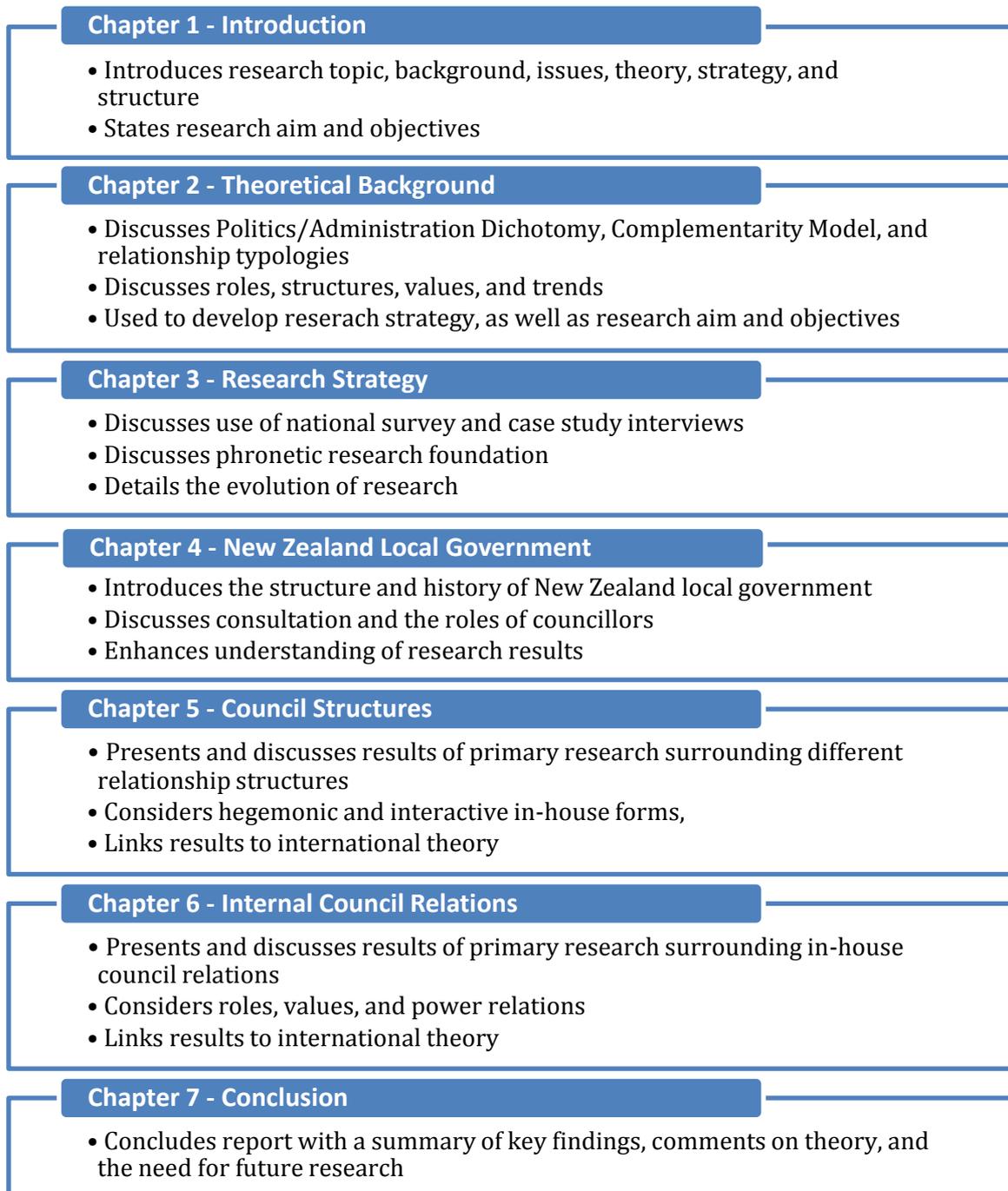


Figure 1.1 - Report Structure

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes a theoretical foundation used for constructing the research aim and objectives. Since Woodrow Wilson founded the field of Public Administration in 1887, there has been a constant (but far from linear) evolution of views, models, and knowledge (Walker, 1989). The evolution of ideas requires a detailed analysis to ensure that research objectives contribute to existing bodies of knowledge, and that optimal research methods are used. This chapter starts by describing and analysing the legal structures of local government. Section 2.3 then presents a discussion on the dominant relationship models that have been developed to categorise the different styles of interactions between elected officials and senior managers. Intrinsically linked to these relationship models are the roles that each group holds. After establishing the theoretical models and considering the major studies that have sought to empirically test these, Section 2.5 examines the impact of three major international trends in local government. This consists of the increased responsibilities and size of local government organisations, the transition from local *government* to local *governance*, and the management shifts pushed by New Public Management principles. It is important to recognise the links between these three trends. While these three trends have been extensively studied, this chapter will only briefly introduce their main points and the debates surrounding them. The focus will instead be on the degree which they are partially influenced by, and result in, changes in the value-sets and relationships within local government.

It is necessary to make a note before assessing the literature. In many subtopics, there is a relatively small amount of previous research and no extensive debates exist (Peters, 1987). Instead, a small number of key academics have produced various noteworthy works and this chapter focuses on a detailed evaluation of these main contributors. In order to partially redress the deficiency of existing debates, a reasonably critical approach is taken in evaluating previous research.

2.2 Structures of Local Government

This section discusses the predominant legal structures of local governments in liberal democratic nations. While time limitations on this study have led to a narrow focus on the council-manager form, the legal structures of government have significant effects on roles and relationships. Consequently, this section establishes a rudimentary comparison of different forms in order to highlight their diversity and the inherent integration of values within each structure. The focus on the council-manager structure in this thesis was chosen due to its international prevalence and use in the New Zealand setting.

Mouritzen and Svava's *Leadership at the Apex* (2002) is a fundamental text in the study of local governmental structure and relations. Part of its legitimacy stems from the use of the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study as a research foundation. This study was the result of the Federation of Local Government Chief Executives (U.Di.T.E) collaborating with the International City Management Association and the Australian Institute for Municipal Management in order to undertake a comprehensive, comparative examination of the frameworks which local government CEOs work within. This study involved interviews with over 4,300 CEOs from 14 countries in the mid-1990s. The international scope and magnitude of the study provides considerable support for the subsequent work by Mouritzen and Svava. Their work regarding the various institutional forms of local government currently dominates the field, due to the small number of academics studying in this area as well as its relatively simple and dispassionate nature.

In addition to its central themes, *Leadership at the Apex* highlights the importance of considering institutional structures. Mouritzen and Svava call attention to a void in studies on local government structures, particularly for comparative research, despite current trends necessitating academic attention. These trends include the rise of directly elected executive mayors, and switches between council-manager and mayor-council institutional forms throughout Europe and the United States (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). Mouritzen and Svava suggest that the form of a government is primarily a result of deeper dispositional cultures, particularly the degree to which the public accept high levels of power delegation. This acceptance, it is argued, comes from high levels of uncertainty, conflict, or heterogeneity. Areas with high levels of these factors are likely to favour powerful political leaders and adopt a strong mayor form, while those with low levels of uncertainty and homogeneous populations may tend towards the council-manager form. Governmental form is also influenced by the

complexity and scope of local government, with larger mandates being likely to elicit more complex and corporate-influenced structures (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002).

Mouritzen and Svava (2002) have put forward four archetypical structures of local government:

- Council-manager form: A city council, including a largely ceremonial mayor and other elected officials, creates policy which is implemented by an appointed CEO holding executive powers
- Strong mayor form: A central mayor controls all executive functions, while an elected council usually holds legislative authority. Systems often include veto rights being held by one or both groups
- Committee-leader form: A single 'political leader' of the municipality shares executive powers with standing committees of other elected politicians and with a CEO
- Collective form: An executive council committee holds collective authority

These four forms reflect different foci between three governmental principles, which are predominantly incorporated by the power distribution in each structure. The first principle is layperson rule, which is based on the premise that decision-making processes should be controlled by the members of the community being affected. This is the foundation of representative democracy and involves electing ordinary citizens for political office to represent the public in decision-making (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). Aspects within this, such as how much authority elected representatives hold and their ability to communicate with staff, are variable between countries. The second principle is political leadership, which is essential for the integration of energy and direction into governmental processes. Professionalism is the third principle and reflects the value placed on professional staff. This value emphasises the skills and non-partisanship of staff, as well as their contribution to the efficiency and rationality of government (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). An evaluation of the four government forms reveals that the strong mayor form prioritises political leadership, the collective form emphasises the layperson rule, the council-manager form stresses professionalism, and the committee-leader form blends all three principles.

The council-manager form is, arguably, one of the most widespread structures of local government. It has grown in popularity since its endorsement by the United States National Municipal League in 1915 and has retained its inclusion in the League's 'Model City Charter',

despite many academics and practitioners holding negative perceptions due to an apparent association with the Politics/Administration Dichotomy (Aberbach et al., 1981; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Pealy, 1958; Svava, 1998, 1999, 2001; Zhang & Feiock, 2010). The dichotomy and its evolution are discussed in Section 2.3.3, along with the reasons for this connection. Elected officials hold ultimate decision-making power in this form and traditionally focus on policy formation, budget control and performance monitoring. Councillors then hire a single employee, the CEO; with the CEO then hiring council staff and administering council policy (Haidar, Reid, & Spooner, 2009). A second key structure is the strong mayor form, where a directly elected mayor holds executive power and is supported by a legislative council (Svava & Watson, 2010). This form often leads to the mayor taking a wide-ranging involvement in council matters, with managers consequently playing a lesser role than in council-manager structures (Svava & Watson, 2010).

England provides an interesting example of a committee-leader system, due to a local government reform in 2000. The new structure generally includes the use of a multitude of planning committees and an overarching Strategic Committee, which consist of selected elected officials (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). While this type of system is currently not used extensively, other European countries are beginning to head in this direction, including the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, and Sweden (Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008). However, there is considerable variation within this form, with the quantity, size, and makeup of committees influencing the manner in which local governments operate. A report for the English government argued that as committee sizes increase, elected members are more likely to take a representative role (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). However, the report also implied that this was not necessarily a benefit, as the representative role would sacrifice decision-making approaches based on robust, impartial planning arguments. Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the reformed English structure is the separation of councillors into executive and 'backbench' members. In this system, the executive members develop and implement policy, while the backbench members promote the interests of the public (or their constituents) and do not hold any executive power (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007; Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008). While the separation of the executive roles and the representative/monitoring roles has resulted in the backbenchers being more responsive to citizen input and acting as community leaders, the perceived (or real) lack of any power has vexed both backbenchers and the public (Askim & Hanssen, 2008; Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). While this system avoids the problematic need for elected officials to negotiate and balance multiple roles, the English context shows that the complete separation of these roles does not strengthen them equally.

2.3 Relationship Models and Typologies

2.3.1 Introduction

Understanding how elected officials and civil servants interact is an extremely relevant issue for studies into local government (Alba & Navarro, 2006). The nature of this relationship has serious impacts on both the operational methods and the quality of outputs from local councils. Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature regarding issues such as how different levels of influence held by city managers affect the quality of decision-making (Zhang & Feiock, 2010). Due to the myriad of influencing factors, there is often a need to combine theoretical evaluations with empirical analyses to gain any accurate understanding of the actual relationships within local government (Alba & Navarro, 2006).

This section examines the evolution of relationship models by discussing two particular models and three wider typologies. Evaluating how elected officials and senior managers interact with each other, these relationship models have been developed to either explain current styles or to suggest ideal approaches. While those covered in this report are comprehensive, the typologies are three of the most acclaimed and a comparison of the models show the fundamental developments that have taken place within the public administration field (Alba & Navarro, 2006). After introducing the background of each typology, the section will group the models by common characteristics.

2.3.2 Key Typologies

The first typology examined is Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's (1981) collection of four dominant relationship models. Their book, *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, is based on a 13 year research project involving systematic interviews of more than 1500 senior bureaucrats, 'high-flying' young bureaucrats, and parliamentary politicians throughout 6 European countries and the United States of America. The magnitude of the study has made it a substantial contribution to the public administration field. This is counterbalanced, however, by the age of the data (with interviews being conducted from 1969-1973) and its focus on relationships on the central government level. While these two factors necessitate a reserve in extrapolating the typology to the local government arena, the key objective of the study was to examine the inherent differences between politicians and bureaucrats, and the impact of these differences on decision-making environments. The lessons provided by the study's results and

discussion are consequently still of considerable significance. The typology developed by the authors is centred on the manner in which the roles and inputs of each group affect their relationship. It presumes that each group has certain inherent positions which impact on how they interact, rather than the converse; which would consider how the power relations and relationships of the groups would impact on the roles of each.

Six years after *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, a typology was published by B. Guy Peters. While this also focused on central government relations, it is fundamentally different from Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's. The key difference lies in the examination of power relations instead of the inputs offered by each group. Consequently, rather than conflicting with Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's, Peters' typology added a second dimension to public administration theory. While the former considers how the roles of politicians and bureaucrats impact on their relations, Peters' can be regarded as looking at the converse; that is, how the relations of the two groups impact on their roles. Peters' five models of interaction are extracted from previous academic attempts to create simplified prototypes for relationship styles in democratic governments. He acknowledges that they are 'ideal' types, in that they show extremes unlikely to be seen in practice but which can be used to evaluate and compare empirical situations.

Table 2.1 below visually presents the five models and the impacts of each. While this table is reasonably succinct, it shows how each model has different factors that should be apparent when evaluating practical situations. Ideally, these factors could be used to consider the placement of case studies within the typology, which would bring the benefit of better understanding the situations.

Table 2.1 - Peters' Typology (Peters, 2001, p. 166)

Type	Tone	Winners	Conflict-resolution	Policy approach	Impacts
Formal-Legal	Integrative	Politicians	Command	Authority	Variability
Village-Life	Integrative	Both	Bargaining	Mutuality	Management
Functional	Integrative	Both	Bargaining	Expertise dominance	Interest
Adversarial	Adversarial	Variable	Power	Conflict	Variability
Administrative State	Integrative	Civil Service	Abdication	Expertise	Stability

In addition to developing this typology, Peters also questioned the factors that lead to local governments using any particular style of relationship. While he recognised the influence that context-specific idiosyncrasies have, he also considered that institutional factors play a key role in the interactions. Peters notes that the decision-making arena benefits from both elected officials and civil servants, as the former bring the benefits of democratic legitimacy and political drive, while the latter carry the benefits of their permanence, expertise and non-partisan nature. However, he states a particular concern for the balance between these values, which are all impacted on by the manner in which the two groups interact. While Peters acknowledges that there is no perfect answer to the need to preserve these values, he posits that the current institutional arrangements *allow* for a balanced relationship which makes use of the strengths of both groups. However, looking at empirically studies, he does not see that currently happening and instead implies that current situations are closest to resembling the Adversarial Model.

The third typology examined was put forth by Mouritzen and Svava in their 2002 book *Leadership at the Apex*, the credentials of which were discussed earlier. Unlike the previous two typologies, Mouritzen and Svava specifically focus on the local government arena, making it very pertinent to the objectives of this research. Unfortunately, while it explicitly states a need for mid-range managers to be examined in addition to the city manager level, the lack of data on the mid-range level leads to this objective being quickly passed over. This is regrettable, as the consideration of how bureaucracy below the top level of management is affected by differing relationships with elected officials (whether personally or institutionally) is a key gap in wider academic research. In the development of their models, Mouritzen and Svava often discuss the similarities and differences to Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's, as well as using justifications from Peters' work. While Zhang and Feiock (2010) called Mouritzen and Svava's work 'pioneering', they criticised the inclusion of managerial preferences within their models, considering it irrelevant due to their formal subordination in structural hierarchies. In addition, they questioned the lack of consideration given to how the skill level of managers impacts on their relationship with elected officials.

In terms of the typological style, Mouritzen and Svava's approach could be placed between Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's and Peters', in that it is heavily concerned with power relations (like the latter), but treats the relations and role divisions in a more integrated manner than either of the previous two typologies. However Mouritzen and Svava still subscribe to the Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's narrow presumptions regarding the values

and norms of each group, weakening the models by failing to consider the effects that the integration or cross-contamination of these could have on the roles and relations of each. The basic presupposition is that elected officials seek to advance political acceptance and agendas, whereas bureaucrats only use professional and general values in their work. While it is possible that this is commonly true, neither Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman, nor Mouritzen and Svava offer any empirical support to justify the presumption.

The typology developed by Mouritzen and Svava comprises four models that reflect different styles of interaction between elected officials and bureaucrats. Table 2.2 below displays the varying features of each model. While it is unlikely that councils will completely fit into any individual model, the presentation of factors that would be expected in each form is useful for assessing the placement of different councils within the typology. The development of research methods considers these factors in order to allow for a comparison between the theoretical models and the observed circumstances in New Zealand councils.

Table 2.2 - Comparison of Relationship Models (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002, p. 43)

	<i>Separate roles</i>	<i>Autonomous administrator</i>	<i>Responsive administrator</i>	<i>Overlapping roles</i>
Degree of hierarchy of politicians and administrators	Clear subordination	Administrators have equal or greater influence	Clear subordination	Reciprocal influence
Extent of separation of spheres	Clear division of roles and functions	Administrators shape policy; elected officials excluded from administration	Elected officials potentially involved in administration	Each set of officials involved in roles of the other
Nature of administrative norms	Commitment to neutral competence	Commitment to neutral competence and maintaining agency prerogatives	Commitment to responsive competence	Commitment to neutral competence and responsiveness to politicians and the public
Form of government	Uncertain: commonly linked to appointed executive systems (council-manager form)	Uncertain: greatest potential in appointed executive systems	Strong political executive systems (mayor-council form)	Parliamentary systems (committee-leader or collective leadership form) or appointed executive systems
Key elected official role and contribution	Elected officials set policy goals and oversee implementation	Elected officials approve policy	Executive drives enactment and implementation of policies	Elected officials make policy and interact with administrators in implementation
Involvement in policy by administrators	Low although active in advice and comment to elected officials	High	Low except as agent of politician	Moderate to high as initiators as well as advisers
Level of influence on policy making	Low	High	Low	Moderate

2.3.3 Politics/Administration Dichotomy

The most common and firmly entrenched relationship model for local government is the Politics/Administration Dichotomy (PAD), a model based on a sharp divide between the policy making role of elected officials and the implementation of the policy by bureaucrats (Aberbach et al., 1981; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Zhang & Feiock, 2010). Another significant aspect of PAD is a strict hierarchy between elected officials and bureaucrats. Variants of PAD are included in all three typologies examined; but while it is the most common and longest lasting model, it is still the most contentious. A strong majority of academics have placed its origin in the hands of Woodrow Wilson and Frank Goodnow (including, but not limited to, Aberbach et al., 1981; Peters, 1987; Zhang & Feiock, 2010). These two authors are both pioneers of the public administration field, which is said to have been founded by Wilson's 1887 publication of *The*

Study of Administration (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). The identification of PAD as a founding principle has been continually argued from both directions since the 1950s, when the term was first coined (Svava, 2001). While Wilson and Goodnow both supported the use of the council-manager form and a division between policy making and policy implementation (Goodnow, 1900; Wilson, 1887), it has been argued that the separation was not meant to be as fixed or simplistic as claimed by their critics. Instead, Wilson and Goodnow desired a structure which protected both the legitimacy of policy-making and the implementation of civic administration (Svava, 1998, 1999, 2001).

The desire for protection stemmed from a concern that party politics could corrupt and politicise purely administrative matters and led to the support of the council-manager form. The form consequently supported by Wilson and Goodnow included a broad authority for elected officials (including administrative oversight), a policy-making role for the city manager, and unhampered discretion for the bureaucracy in their consideration of administrative issues (Goodnow, 1900; Svava, 1998, 1999; Wilson, 1887, 1966; Woodruff, 1919). This need for 'unhampered discretion' to implement policy makes the action itself an inherently political process, a fact originally recognised by both Wilson and Goodnow but overlooked by the subsequent generations of academics who interpreted their ideas as a dichotomy between political and non-political actors (Goodnow, 1900; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Svava, 1999; Wilson, 1887). While it was appreciated that the bureaucracy should be protected from interference by politicians, the elected officials were always seen to hold an important role in overseeing operations (Svava, 1998). This is considered necessary, both to retain public accountability and for elected officials to gain an understanding and appreciation for the day-to-day issues in administering the policy that the elected officials develop (Nalbandian, Keene, O'Neill, & Portillo, 2007). The issues inherent within a strict version of PAD are often alleviated by academics promoting a 'reinterpreted dichotomy', which tend to resemble the model originally promoted by Wilson (Aberbach et al., 1981; Lepawsky, 1949; Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Peters, 1995; Putnam, 1975). However, a single synchronised explanation for the reinterpreted dichotomy is clearly absent, restricting the ability for constructive theoretical debate.

1915 saw the National Municipal League endorse the council-manager form (Svava, 1998). This ideal structure was closely aligned to Goodnow and Wilson's ideas and included separate roles. The form also contained links between the groups, including the oversight by elected officials and the influential advisory role of city managers (Adrian, 1987). Public and academic views

towards the council-manager form turned increasingly negative through the 1920s, with critics bemoaning the levels of power and influence held by city managers and calling for re-establishing the subservience of city managers (Svara, 1999, 2001). The Great Depression of the 1930s resulted in increased levels of stress on city managers, whose main job was perceived (both by themselves and the public) to be concentrating on cost-savings and efficiency rather than political issues such as policy development (Svara, 1998). Ironically, while the scope of their role and formal authority was diminished through the 1920s and 1930s, the informal (and unseen) influence of city managers (and the bureaucracy in general) increased as their administrative focus allowed them to control the information and options that were presented to council (Pealy, 1958; Svara, 1998, 1999). The issue of institutional hierarchies being undermined by the dependency of elected officials for information has continued to the present and remains relatively unsolved (Parkin, 1994; Pealy, 1958). The 1920s/1930s era is considered to be the only one in which an actual dichotomy was strived for and has been referred to as an 'aberration' which was "essentially different from concepts of democracy and administration that preceded and followed it" (Svara, 1998, p. 2). The attempt to retain a true dichotomy between policy making and implementation declined from the 1940s onwards (Svara, 1998, 2001). The scope of city managers increased to once again include acting as a policy advisor, community leader, and cross-sector ambassador (Svara, 1998).

PAD is generally considered by academics to be pragmatically impossible due to its simplicity, the inability for bureaucrats to remain indiscretionary, and the influence of local power relations on formal hierarchies (Aberbach, Mezger, & Rockman, 1991; Aberbach et al., 1981). Despite these issues, PAD has maintained its prevalence among practitioners for a variety of reasons (Alba & Navarro, 2006; Long, 1954; Peters, 1987). One possible cause for this is the engrained presumption that it is tied to the founding ideas of public administration and the council-manager form (Svara, 1998). Most significantly however, it allows for bureaucrats to participate in decision-making at a sub-policy level without being accountable to either the elected officials or the public (Peters, 1995; Putnam, 1975). This also reduces the accountability of elected officials, who can point to the technical considerations of bureaucrats as the reasons behind local decisions (Svara, 2001). The perception that PAD reflects empirical circumstances has had numerous negative impacts, including a lack of recognition for both the influence of city managers in policy formation and the role of elected officials in overseeing administration (Svara, 1998). Another persuasive argument for why PAD has been retained is presented succinctly by Golembiewski and Gabris (1994, p. 8) in that despite PAD's

weaknesses, “the council-manager form of government is, however, still searching for a better conceptualisation of relationships, and some practitioners cling to old ideas”.

2.3.4 Input-based Models

Numerous relationship models focus on the inputs of each group. Within Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman’s typology, Image II is a facts/interests divide. This assumes that both politicians and civil servants participate in policy-making, but with different styles of inputs. Civil servants provide expertise, while politicians impart values and interests. While this is more realistic than PAD, it retains the presumption that politicians do not hold any technical opinions and civil servants distance themselves from any socio-political issues. Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman perceive this model as having originated in the first half of the 20th century (Aberbach et al., 1991, 1981).

Within the same typology, Image III is an energy/equilibrium divide. Like Image II, it recognises the participation of both bureaucrats and politicians, but extends on this by acknowledging that both have a political attitude. Image III instead perceives that the inputs of each are distinguishable by the social group being represented and the contribution of energy and equilibrium. Politicians, it is argued, articulate the broad, generalised interests of unorganised citizens and introduce political energy into governmental operations. On the other hand, bureaucrats focus on the narrow interests of groups that their departments are involved with and ensure institutional equilibrium by promoting the interests of organised clienteles. These interest groups are perceived to be desirous of maintaining the status quo, while the general disorganised public desire change. Both this presumption and the suggestion that each group is linked to different constituents are not substantiated to any significant degree; however a separation based on roles and interests is a useful concept to consider and was investigated in primary research.

2.3.5 Power-based Models

Both Peters and Mouritzen and Svava give particular attention to issues of power relations. This stands in contrast to Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman’s typology and makes it difficult to make direct comparisons. Discussing scenarios with significant issues around power relations, Peters’ Adversarial Model represents scenarios in which politicians and senior civil servants vie for authority. This model can be used to depict situations both within and outside of a PAD. The Adversarial Model can arise from the inertia and stubbornness of civil servants in the face

of new ideas, or impatience from new, naïve politicians. Alternatively, the conflict can arise from the difference in backgrounds and policy ideas held by each group. In terms of authority, the legal hierarchical advantages of political executives are countered by the bureaucrats having more fixed, long-term positions and an apparent neutrality.

While the Adversarial Model emphasises power struggles, Peters' Administrative State Model and Mouritzen and Svava's Autonomous Administrator Model both describe situations in which the bureaucratic arm of governments hold greater influence. This is generally caused by the complexity of technical issues in local government. As the elected officials may not have the expertise required to proficiently evaluate technical options, they are dependent on the expert staff for information and advice. The constant growth in the roles of local government is further reducing the ability for elected officials to retain control over all facets of council operations and consequently leads to a greater transfer of responsibility to the bureaucrats. While the abdication of authority (whether formal or informal) to bureaucrats is reasonable and even judicious in entirely technical issues, matters which have social concerns or a substantial impact on the public require the legitimacy that elected officials, as representatives, bring to decision-making processes.

Conversely, Mouritzen and Svava's Responsive Administrator Model presumes a subordination of bureaucrats to politicians and a matching dominance of political norms. In this model, the legal hierarchical advantage of politicians leads to a dependence of bureaucrats, who have to defer to political values and face the intervention of elected officials in most processes. This intervention is the key difference to the PAD, which also highlights the control of politicians.

2.3.6 Fusion-based Models

All three typologies examined include models reflecting an amalgamation of values, attitudes, and roles held by elected officials and bureaucrats. However, a comparison of the models reveals different foci, reflecting the different approaches taken within the larger typologies. The models within Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's typologies involve progressively increasing amounts of overlap between the roles of each group. Image IV, the final model, reflects a 'pure hybrid'. This involves an institutional framework in which a political-bureaucratic division is redundant, as there is instead a single group acting as both staff and politicians and holding the same values, roles, and career progressions. While Images I, II, and III are meant to act as historic interpretations, Image IV was put forward by the authors as a future trend, speculated to be furthered throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Aberbach et al., 1981). In a later study in

1991 reviewing the typology, Aberbach, Mezger, and Rockman admit that the observed uptake of Image IV had been slow (Aberbach et al., 1991). Consideration of Image IV requires significant reserve however, as it can be seen in a more pronounced manner in central government structures than in local governments. Consequently, this speculated trend may not be appropriate to extend to local government studies, although it is important to be aware of.

Mouritzen and Svava also focus on roles in their typology and the Overlapping Roles Model presumes the presence of extensive interaction, reciprocal influence and intersecting role definitions between elected officials and bureaucrats. Mouritzen and Svava perceive this model as the most appropriate in describing the original views of Wilson, Goodnow and other early promoters of the council-manager form, in addition to dominating current local government practices. This model incorporates Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's Image II and III by recognising how the two groups work within the same realm but with different inputs; however it rejects the narrow perspective on administrative inputs that is offered in either image. Instead, the Overlapping Roles Model is concerned with functional inputs, which consider the distribution of council workloads (while administrative inputs predominantly affect the character of work undertaken). The Overlapping Roles Model also closely resembles the Image IV (Pure Hybrid) model, but distances itself by stressing how the distinctive worldviews and career paths that are embedded into each group impacts on their respective approaches.

Peters' typology, which emphasises power relations, features the Village Life and Function Village Life models. These are both based on the concept that the socialisation and recruitment processes cause a fusion of values between elected officials and senior managers. In addition to uniting against outside interference, it is argued that political and bureaucratic 'elites' hold such closely-intertwined values that they should be treated as a single group. This is closely aligned with Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's Image IV (Pure Hybrid), in that they both challenge the assumption that models should divide the two groups. While the impacts caused by their differing backgrounds are largely overlooked by Peters, he acknowledges that the differences in time available to the two groups would cause variance in their styles of operation. While this model originally came from the study of British civil servants within the Treasury, it is still very useful to reflect on when considering political-bureaucratic structures within local government. This is in contrast to the Functional Village Life Model, which is centred on the 'elite' elected officials and managers coalescing within functional areas. The model predicts that civil servants and political executives within the same functional area form

close ties, leading to conflict between the policy sectors. The relevance of the Functional Village Life Model depends on the institutional government form of particular countries and those with a low amount of local government responsibilities would be less likely to contain sector conflicts. As large-scale governmental services (such as health and education) in New Zealand are predominantly controlled by the central government, the original Village Life Model holds more relevance.

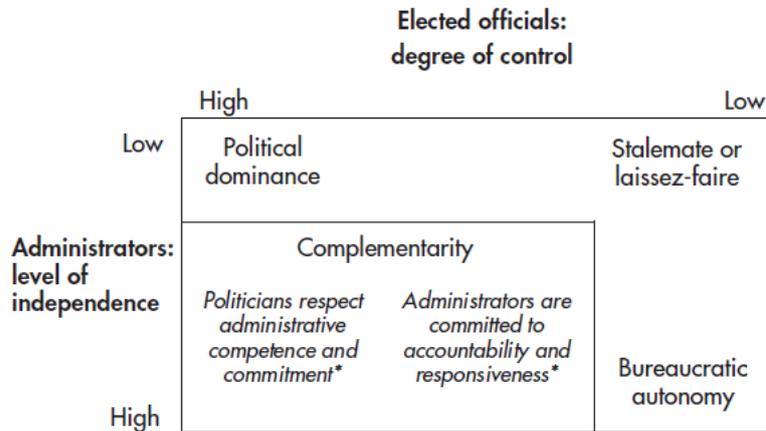
2.3.7 Complementarity Model

The most contemporary model developed within the local administration field is Svava's (1999) Complementarity Model. After evaluating the potential for a broadened PAD to act as an expedient relationship model, Svava concluded that a new alternative was needed. In contrast to PAD and other models which focus on who *cannot* partake in specific roles, he desired a model which was based on affirmative and complementary roles and relations (Svava, 1998, 2006). As a response, Svava slowly developed the Complementarity Model. While he was the first to give this a name and explicitly promote this model, he has never claimed to be its creator, discussing at length how a multitude of previous academics have promoted particular aspects, including both Wilson and Goodnow (Svava, 1999, 2001).

The Complementarity Model is based on the premise that elected officials and bureaucrats join together in the mutual pursuit of good governance, resulting in a high level of interaction and reciprocal influence between the two groups (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Svava, 2001, 2006). While the model recognises the distinct roles, backgrounds and perspectives, it highlights the integration resulting from the interdependence, reciprocal influence and overlapping functions of the groups (Svava, 1999, 2001). The interdependence results from the need of politicians to have expertise within their institution and the need of bureaucrats to have their work legitimised and publicly supported (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002).

Within their interactions, each group needs to respect the skills and responsibilities of the other in order to work together in a balanced and efficient manner (Svava, 2006). Elected officials can theoretically dominate by their legal superiority, but instead respect administrative competence and commitment. In turn, bureaucrats restrain themselves from the potential for total self-direction due to an appreciation for accountability and democratic principles (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Svava, 1999, 2001). This mutual respect and deference is suggested to create moderation and balance in most circumstances (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). However, political dominance or bureaucratic autonomy can still eventuate if there is a lack of

respect or commitment by either group. This scenario, which is always ineffectual, would fall outside of the Complementarity Model (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002), as shown in Figure 2.1 below.



**Reciprocating values that reinforce the position of other set of officials.*

Figure 2.1 - The Placement of the Complementarity Model (Svava, 2001, p. 179)

Svava used the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study (introduced in Section 2.2), which included a comprehensive section on preferences regarding the level of involvement by different groups in different task areas. Amongst the findings is that elected officials have an appreciation for the fact that rather than undermining democracy, bureaucrats give it capacity and effect. Svava believed that the Complementarity Model fits the data of the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study, a claim which carries a great deal of weight due its sheer size (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Svava, 2006). This suggests that in addition to being an ideal model, it is being enacted in practice (Svava, 2001). However, it is difficult to assess the possibility that the fit is a result of a broadness of the model, in which case it would have little value despite any perceived or real accuracy.

According to the results of U.Di.T.E Leadership Study, the main point of disagreement found between elected officials and bureaucrats is in the degree to which councillors involve themselves in the administration. While bureaucrats recognise the fact that councillors should have some involvement, the data suggests that they believe that current levels of interference are too high (Svava, 2006). This is matched with a perception by both groups that bureaucrats have a mandate to involve themselves in the roles and responsibilities of councillors. These findings suggest a continued support for a 're-interpreted PAD' (as discussed in the previous section) by bureaucrats. While a re-interpreted PAD would explain the rough separation of roles in which some areas should be dominated by a specific group, the Complementarity Model would instead suggest an acceptance of involvement by elected officials within the

administrative function if it was clear that they were giving input appropriate to their overarching purpose.

In relation to the four-sided typology developed along with Mouritzen, Svava's Complementarity Model would sit most appropriately within the Overlapping Roles Model. The Complementarity Model can be seen to incorporate aspects of Peters' Village Life model (in the reciprocal influence) as well as Aberbach et al.'s Image II and III (in the recognition of input differences, but without the conjectural presumptions). Since its establishment, the Complementarity Model has received support from empirical studies undertaken by Alba and Navarro (2006), Pullin and Haidar (2003) and Zhang and Feiock (2010).

2.3.8 Summary

This chapter has examined numerous relationship models based on a variety of viewpoints. Findings have revealed a diverse range of relationships between elected officials and management in liberal democratic nations. A visual review of the models is presented below in Figure 2.2. This examination of literature is an important aspect of the current research, as it will allow for the data analysis to establish how the New Zealand setting is situated in relation to alternative structures. In addition, links can be made between the relationships in New Zealand territorial authorities and the theoretical models that have been developed. These links will carry benefits for understanding local circumstances, but will also allow the research to contribute to the existing foundation of literature.

	<u>1981</u> Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman	<u>1987</u> Peters	<u>1999</u> Svara	<u>2002</u> Mouritzen and Svara
Separation-based models	Image I (Politics/ Administration Divide)	Formal/Legal Model		Separate Roles Model
Input-based models	Image II (Facts/Interest) Image III (Energy/ Equilibrium)		Complementarity Model	Overlapping Roles Model
Fusion-based models	Image IV (Pure Hybrid Model)	Village Life Model Functional Village Life Model		
Power-based models		Adversarial Model Administrative State Model		Autonomous Administrator Model Responsive Administrator Model

Figure 2.2 - Summary of Relationship Models

2.4 Roles and Value Integration

Heavily intertwined with the nature of local government relationships are the formal and informal roles allocated or taken by each group. To undertake any descriptive or normative study relating to local government operations, there is an inherent need to understand the functions of both elected officials and bureaucrats. This section aims to use the work that has been done in this field, which is divided into three main subsections, to help comprehend their respective positions within council relationships. Firstly, the role priorities of elected officials are discussed. Extensive research has been undertaken in this area, looking at how elected officials balance their responsibilities of representation, administrative oversight, and policy development. This field is far from stagnant, with on-going changes being an inherent result of current trends towards privatisation, participative planning, and governance (aspects discussed in Section 2.5).

The second main focus is derived from the first area of literature; evaluating how elected officials actions relate to their representative role. This examines how elected officials can act as either community delegates or trustees. This includes the way which they incorporate public opinion into decision-making processes. The third main focus is on the role of bureaucrats within council, including values that influence their actions. Examining the approaches,

attitudes, and roles taken by bureaucrats and elected officials is essential for understanding how the backgrounds of each group influence their relations.

Local governments balance a wide array of social values, which affect the roles of both elected officials and bureaucrats. These values vary between and within cultures. Within liberal democratic nations, such as New Zealand, dominant values include accountability, equality, representation, accessibility, transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency (Berry, 2009; Dollery, 2010). Examining the roles of each group is expected to elucidate the manner in which values are integrated into local government. It is expected that each group, while concentrating on different values, balances a wider range of social values. The particular operative approaches of local governments may be seen as an amalgamation of value sets, statutory mandates, and the relationship characteristics described in the previous chapter. However, this trifecta of influential factors is inseparable from contextual factors surrounding the social, cultural, economic and institutional features of individual places.

2.4.1 Role Priorities of Elected Officials

Two key factors in the behaviour of elected officials are their perceived and legal role priorities. Elected officials have traditionally acted as the key link between citizens and local governance (Verhelst, Steyvers, & Reynaert, 2009). However, this representative role is supplemented by responsibilities of policy-making and administrative oversight (Verhelst et al., 2009). While there are sometimes statutory role descriptions for elected officials, or firmly entrenched (albeit unofficial) pre-existing relations and role divisions with bureaucrats, councillors almost always bring preconceived ideas on the nature of both their role, and the role of bureaucrats (Alba & Navarro, 2006).

A key study in issues of role priorities, Verhelst et al. (2009) examined the Belgian context and found a distinct need for balances. For example, a focus on the administrative role can be perceived by the public either positively as good governance and accountability, or negatively as obstructive bureaucracy. This is the same for the representative role, in which a targeted emphasis can be interpreted as being a recognisable and democratic councillor, or as a morally weak populist. Work by Kalk and De Rynck (and summarised in English by Verhelst et al.) confirms this need for balance, pointing to the differences in popular opinion on councillors in Holland and Belgium. They argue that Dutch councillors are perceived as being “stuck with their noses in the files”, while Belgian councillors only care about “political favour in their local

bars” (Verhelst et al., 2009, p. 10). This comparison shows both the differences made by differing role priorities and the ability for legitimacy to be threatened by either extreme.

In Verhelst et al.’s Belgian study, it was found that councillors regard representation as the most significant role, with 88.3% considering it to be important. Policy-making and municipal control were both highly valued however (at 77.9% and 80.2% respectively), supporting the multi-faceted nature of elected officials. While representation was rated at most important, this would be expected to vary between different local governments (both intranationally and internationally) as a result of variances in the degree to which council staff incorporate public concerns. In Hanssen’s recent study of the Norwegian experience it was found that planners distance themselves from public desires and reactions, leading to councilors needing to spend a significant amount of time acting as intermediaries (Hanssen, 2010).

In contrast to the relatively high levels of appreciation for the importance of each role, respondents were much less enthusiastic when asked how they perceive their personal contribution to each element. Despite their high appreciation for representation, only 66.3% felt they had contributed to this, with even lower figures for policy-making and municipal control (39.2% and 53.2%). In addition to showing relatively low satisfaction about their abilities, these figures show a disparity in the success of each field. While perceived contribution to representation was only 10% less than its perceived importance, municipal control had a 27% difference and almost half the amount of councilors appreciating their policy-making role felt they had not contributed to this (Verhelst et al., 2009). This shows a marked difference between the perceptions of their roles and the institutional capabilities for councilors to contribute to these roles.

In addition to the mismatch between role perceptions and the ability to perform roles, there are differences in the role expectations over political and cultural spaces, with context having a significant impact on the expected operating styles of elected officials. For example, there are significant differences within Belgium, with local government in Flanders being focused on administration while Brussels and Walloon are more concerned with representation (Verhelst et al., 2009). This shows that role performances that may be viewed as legitimate governance in some areas may be unacceptable in others.

2.4.2 Representative Approaches of Elected Officials

This section analyses the approaches taken by elected officials in their role of community representatives. An overview of work by Gunlicks (1969), Malik (1983), and Newton (1974) provides an overview on the attitudes held by elected officials in regard to their representative responsibilities, while a brief examination of work by Hanssen (2010) and the English Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) will examine the practical implementation.

Both Malik's study on Indian local government and Gunlicks' work in Western Germany are centred on Edmund Burke's two key dualisms (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). The first is the question of whether representatives should work towards the interests of their particular constituency or for the common good of the community as a whole. The second is the ability for representatives to act a trustee (using their judgment in decision-making) or as a delegate (continually following the wishes of the community) (Cheyne, 2004; Eulau, Wahlke, Buchanan, & Ferguson, 1959; Malik, 1983). Burke was strongly in favour of trustee representation of the common good of the larger community concerned, a view which is still strong today (Cheyne, 2004; Forgie et al., 1999). While Burke's philosophising was in the eighteenth century, Gunlicks observed a broad agreement in German literature that 'true representation' only exists when elected officials are free to use their judgment and conscience to serve the common good (Eulau et al., 1959; Gunlicks, 1969). In addition to disputing pure delegation, this is a reflection on the interference of partisan politics, which he sees as also hindering 'true representation' (Gunlicks, 1969). The arguments of different representative approaches do not only relate to legitimacy, but also the efficiency of government. Elite theorists argue that the public is generally insufficiently informed, interested, or capable to make decisions in the best interests of the community, although is highly contested (Forgie et al., 1999). However, for elected officials who agree with this outlook, the decision to act as a delegate or trustee (whether for individual issues or at a larger scale) is predominantly an issue of balancing efficiency or legitimacy (Forgie et al., 1999).

Gunlicks conducted interviews with 92 councillors which, although conducted over 40 years ago, still hold interesting results. Only 23% felt that councillors should primarily represent their particular constituency, while 60% felt the community as a whole should be the primary concern. In alignment with critiques from Burke's contemporaries, some respondents from Gunlicks' study stated that the community was too fragmented, heterogeneous, and contradictory for any ideas about the 'common good' to be worked towards or represented.

These respondents subscribed to another popular ideology; that targeted representation is necessary for all different social groups to be heard and empowered. Malik's study showed a particularly strong case of this in the Indian setting, where elected officials often tend towards acting as a spokesperson, or delegate, due to the heterogeneous social makeup of multiple castes with immensely divergent needs and desires.

Gunlicks dismisses the idea that Burke's dualism could be thought of as a dichotomy. For rejecting the constituency/common good 'dichotomy', he points to the high number of conditional responses for questions asking about the level of priority given to each group. In addition, a large proportion of respondents insisted they had never been involved in a conflict between their own ideologies and the desires of their constituency, or the community in general. This supports an inapplicability of Burke's delegate/trustee dualism in the German political environment, while it retained its relevance in the Indian setting. Both Gunlicks and Malik's key conclusion however, is that it is imprudent and misleading to hypothetically evaluate how elected officials make decisions, as this is usually fluid and dependent on particular circumstances. While this has resulted in numerous empirical studies (such as by Gunlicks and Malik) of stated attitudes, these are often impaired by the lack of objective examination of actual behaviour. Realising this, Newton looked to conduct a systematic evaluation of role orientations and their causes within the English local government system of the time.

Newton used a simple methodology, mixing very direct questions (for example, one described the difference between delegates and trustees and asked which the respondent subscribed to) with questions on their actions within council. These were then compared to check for the logical connections which would be presumed if the attitude-based questions reflected actual behaviour. The factors that were found to induce a trustee approach included a high level of complexity or technicality in the issues concerned, and a higher level of political experience. More experienced councillors are likely to favour the politico or trustee roles due their more proficient decision-making skills (whether these are real or merely perceived). In contrast, inexperienced councillors are likely to act as delegates in order to win political favour and recognition. Similarly, they are more likely to represent their own ward/constituency rather than larger areas, and prefer dealing with individual issues rather than larger policy matters. While Newton did not desire to categorise councillors, he proposed three key reasons behind role orientation. These were ideological outlook (political views), political maturity (experience), and whether they are a "dedicated political animal" (passionate).

Elected officials are in a position to receive complaints and requests by the public relating to development proposals. Their involvement is derived from a public desire for a responsive and accountable proxy to assist in dealings with council staff. While this has clear benefits and is associated with the role of elected officials to oversee council operations, there are also significant risks (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). These arise from perceived and real subjectivities, nepotism and the potential undermining of established decision-making processes. Consequently, different countries (and councils within countries) have differed on rules and attitudes concerning councillor involvement in planning applications. It is usually seen, however, as having positive potential if undertaken within an explicit and transparent code of conduct (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007). In order to optimally integrate elected officials into planning processes, they need to understand and feel a sense of ownership over the policies that they are expected to implement. This can be reached by training sessions and high levels of interaction between staff and councillors (Daya-Winterbotham, 2004; Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007; Drage, 2008; Pealy, 1958).

Other issues still persist within the practical involvement of elected officials. The intrinsic goals of politicians can conflict with best practice decision-making. Councillors often strive for increased public visibility, and this can inhibit the impartiality required in decision-making processes. In the words of one elected official, “a quiet councillor is a dead councillor”, and this can drive politicians to make decisions based on political advancement rather than on resource management principle (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007, p. 32). In addition to affecting the quality of decisions, such issues reduce the trust between planning officers and councillors. This trust is necessary for officers to feel comfortable passing large, complex or controversial applications onto elected officials, and for the latter to feel confident leaving the others to the planning officers (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007).

2.4.3 Roles of Bureaucrats

In addition to the variances in the way elected officials see themselves and their roles, bureaucrats can also take very different approaches to their roles and relations within council. Despite this, several academics conceive council staff as narrow-minded, valueless technocrats. Parkin, for instance, writes extensively on the need for ‘technocrats’ to integrate social goals into their work rather than focusing exclusively on the short-term efficiency and effectiveness of their field (Parkin, 1994). This apparent narrow focus is a key factor for the presumed

neutrality of bureaucrats and results in the significant risk of divorcing technique from purpose and placing efficiency over equity (Adams & Balfour, 1998; Parkin, 1994). However, this neutrality and narrow focus is challenged by others who provide a variety of alternatives, which tend to consider neutrality principles in more moralist terms (Haidar et al., 2009; Keating, 1995; Pullin & Haidar, 2003). The behaviour and attitudes of CEOs result from a large variety of factors, ranging from socio-cultural and institutional environments to the personal characteristics of the individuals (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002).

Studies on local government management often consider managers as acting in one of three ways: in a neutral, trustee, or responsive manner (B. Buchanan, 1975; Haidar et al., 2009; Keating, 1995; Pullin & Haidar, 2003). Alternatively, Mouritzen and Svava developed a typology of four categories into which CEOs are likely to fall. These all fall within Svava's larger Complementarity Model, as discussed in the previous section. In this typology, categories of CEOs include:

- Interdependent CEO
- Dependent Professional Agent
- Dependent Political Agent
- Independent CEO

Firstly, CEOs may be interdependent with elected officials. This occurs when both groups hold relatively high degrees of authority, but appreciate their dependence on the other and recognise the importance of their inputs (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). To the support of Svava's Complementarity Model, which sees a recognised interdependence as optimal, 56% of all CEOs within the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study perceive themselves as being in an interdependent relationship with their elected officials. Alternatively, dependent professional agents have a high degree of authority and are predisposed to asserting their professional opinions, while still recognising their responsibilities and serving elected officials (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). The neutrality principle can be considered to incorporate both of these groups. 'Neutral' managers value legal requirements above anything else, which includes accepting the hegemonic superiority of elected officials (Pullin & Haidar, 2003). The advice given by neutral managers tends to be frank, honest and expertise-driven, impartially incorporating the goals of councillors, the public interest and policy merits (Haidar et al., 2009). Results from numerous empirical studies, including the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study, have revealed a dominance of support for the neutrality of local government managers (Haidar et al., 2009; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Pullin & Haidar, 2003).

Dependent political agents, or responsive CEOs, are those without a high degree of autonomy and who predominantly act in the political interests of the elected officials (Haidar et al., 2009; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). This would fit in with institutional environments requiring and featuring strong leadership, such as a strong mayor structure. Advice and other operations are consequently undertaken subjectively and information is often misrepresented to support the political interests of council (Haidar et al., 2009). This approach can be taken willingly, but may also be a result of pressure by councillors. Responsive managers often have a great level of respect for the hierarchical nature of local government and claim the representative legitimacy of elected officials as justification for any actions undertaken under their delegation (Keating, 1995).

While the previous categories of managers require relatively authoritative elected officials, independent CEOs are usually found in institutions with a leadership vacuum. Interesting, while only 16% of all CEOs perceive themselves as independent from elected officials, this proportion increases to 39% when looking specifically at CEOs within Council-Manager local government organisations (Mouritzen & Svava, 2002). This highlights the significance that the institutional structure plays in the role divisions and power relations between the two groups. While Mouritzen and Svava discuss 'independent CEOs', the majority of public administration academics look at 'trustee' CEOs. These two groups are very similar, as both highlight the independence of managers. However, trustee managers elevate the 'public good' as their dominant concern and driver, while dependent managers do not necessarily hold this value (B. Buchanan, 1975). Trustee management is often promoted as a morally-aware alternative to neutrality, whose critics often perceive it as having complete objectivity as an impossible requisite (B. Buchanan, 1975; Keating, 1995). However, critics of trusteeship often point to the difficulty and risks of leaving managers to interpret 'public interests'. A second issue is the lack of accountability for managers who disregard the will of elected officials, with the latter group holding the social accountability through their election (Pullin & Haidar, 2003). However, trustee managers are often seen to be more outcome-focused and consequently often gain support due to their perceived efficiency and pragmatism (Keating, 1995).

2.4.4 Influence of Structure on Roles and Relations

Alba and Navarro's (2006) international study on the experiences and opinions of mayors has the differences between institutional structures as a key focus. While it is impossible to discern which factor is influencing the other, it is immediately apparent that the structure and nature of role divisions and relationships are heavily connected. Their quantitative analysis of responses

showed that 71% of mayors in strong mayor government feel that bureaucrats should stick to politically defined goals 'as far as possible', a feeling shared by only 47% of those in council-manager governments. Interestingly, while this is paralleled in the responses about elected officials not intervening in the tasks of administration, strong mayors are more emphatic than those in council-manager structures about their responsibilities to guide the day-to-day activities of staff. This reveals a desire to control the administration, while avoiding political interference.

These findings show the support for a traditional separation of roles by strong mayors, with more cross-over desired by mayors within council-manager governments. Both groups acknowledge that CEOs are highly influential (71%), and that heads of departments are either moderately or highly influential (>90%). However, the perceived influence of CEOs and departmental heads was notably more pronounced within governments with council-manager forms. This suggests that in addition to having looser role divisions, council-manager governments also give greater influence to the bureaucracy. While these results hold a moderate level of influence, it is important to note the shortcomings within Alba and Navarro's study. Firstly, the methods of their study are largely absent, despite the considerable discussion and claims being made. While this is the main research-based weakness, there is a need to recognise that its solitary emphasis on mayoral perceptions cannot be relied on to provide an empirically accurate account of local government conditions.

2.5 Local Government Trends

There are a multitude of local government trends that result in changes to the roles and relations of councils. In order to keep a balance between the core research questions and the surrounding issues, this section gives attention to three of the most prominent trends. These are the increased amount of complexity and responsibilities held by local government, the increased emphasis placed on the role of co-ordinators within pluralist governance structures, and the rise of New Public Management.

2.5.1 Increased Responsibilities of Local Government

The increase in local government responsibilities is partially driven by the Principle of Subsidiarity, which states that public responsibility should preferably be exercised by those authorities closest to the citizens affected (Baker, Van de Walle, & Skelcher, 2011).

Consequently, local governments are increasingly undertaking tasks that have traditionally been the concern of central government (Verhelst et al., 2009). A second key driver of the increase in responsibilities is the amalgamation of local authorities. These amalgamations generally result from a desire to improve efficiency, although the validity of this view does not have unanimous support. Some authors have argued that efficiency often decreases with size as a result of diseconomies of scales and a reduced ability for scrutiny and accountability (Boyne, 1998, 2002; Dollery, 2010; McKinlay Douglas Limited, 2006). Nevertheless, the presumption that larger councils are more efficient is still dominant in both practice and theory, with claims largely based on enhanced economies of scale (Soul, 2000; Soul & Dollery, 2000). However, the presumption of increased efficiency is not matched in regard to social legitimacy. While there have been studies showing a lack of impact on political participation (Soul, 2000; Soul & Dollery, 2000), the academic literature is dominated by the perception that amalgamations do involve a trade-off between democracy and efficiency (Aulich, 1999, 2005; Burdess & O'Toole, 2004; Hughes & Costar, 2006; Kiss, 2003; Verhelst et al., 2009).

A key result of the increased responsibilities for local governments is the professionalisation of elected officials (Forgie et al., 1999; Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008; Verhelst et al., 2009). While political representation at the local level has previously been about amateurism, volunteerism and equality, the increased expectations surrounding expertise and time have led to elected offices being dominated by a subgroup within the community profile (Forgie et al., 1999; Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008; Verhelst et al., 2009). This subgroup tends to be educated, male-dominated and centred around the tertiary sector (Verhelst et al., 2009). In attempts to maintain equal opportunities by ensuring poorer sectors of the community can afford to give their time, the majority of countries and regions have introduced the remuneration of elected officials (Forgie et al., 1999; Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008). However, this has acted as a double-edged sword, as the idea of financial compensation has often turned into generous, market-driven salaries which result in the professionalisation of the role of local politician (Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008; Meadowcroft, 2001). This, combined with the growing expectations around time and expertise, has led to increasing numbers of elected offices being the sole paid activities of officials (Forgie et al., 1999; Meadowcroft, 2001). Issues around the increased responsibilities of elected officials have significant impacts on council relationships, due to changes in power relations and role divisions.

2.5.2 Pluralist Governance

A second key trend is the transition from local *government* to local *governance* (Alba & Navarro, 2006; Guérin & Kerrouche, 2008; Hanssen, 2010). This describes the movement away from local councils acting as the sole policy-making institution running an area and towards an interconnected network of actors (Drage, 2008). In this new approach, local councils work with other governmental agencies, business groups, community groups and other such organisations (Alba & Navarro, 2006; Brugue & Valles, 2005; Cheyne, 2004, 2009). This trend has been extensively studied by academics, both empirically and idealistically. In terms of the current research topic, the main ramification is the need for local governments to evolve new roles, both externally and internally. Most prominent is the new importance given to the elected official role of co-ordinating the various groups (Alba & Navarro, 2006; Hanssen, 2010; Nalbandian et al., 2007). Brugue and Valles' (2005) Catalan study, which compared interviews from a 1980s research project with a second in the last 1990s, concluded that their local council politicians have become increasingly strategic, pluralist and relational. The impact of this new approach on the power of councils and elected officials has been questioned in the international literature, with both Nalbandian et al. (2007) and Alba and Navarro (2006) withholding any categorical judgement. Both sets of authors imply that the diffusion of decision-making does not inherently reduce the influence of local councils, but would make well-developed external relationships a key requisite for the effectiveness of local governments.

While most academics have focused on the changes local councils need to make to remain effective in governance networks, there is a smaller (but equally necessary) discussion regarding the effect on integrating social values and desires. Having a network of actors setting directions and making policies in an internally interactive style has the potential to significantly harm public transparency (Thomas & Memon, 2005). While the traditional system placed a final accountability with elected officials, the multiplicity of decision-makers within governance networks takes this away and replaces it with uncertainty around liability. A related issue is the neoliberal placement of influence within private sectors, which is discussed in the following section. In addition to co-ordinating governance networks, councillors need to protect the interests and ensure the representation of all sectors and social groups (Nalbandian et al., 2007). Hanssen's study shows how this role has been picked up extensively in the Norwegian context, with elected officials spending a considerable amount of time and effort promoting the incorporation of citizen interests into the market-based planning system (Hanssen, 2010).

2.5.3 New Public Management

One of the most substantial contemporary trends in local government is the proliferation of New Public Management (NPM). While NPM has been defined in many different ways, the basic premise lies in the reorganisation of the public sector according to principles of management from the private sector (Forgie et al., 1999). Key aspects tend to include decentralisation, minimisation of regulation, and market-centred policy (Nalbandian et al., 2007). The specific ways that it has been incorporated into local governments has varied significantly, with common reorganisations looking to privatisation, contracting out of services, public-private partnerships, and competitive economic incentives (Nalbandian et al., 2007). A common argument for NPM is that the monopolisation of service provision by public institutions results in inefficiencies, while the competitive nature of the economic market makes NPM measures result in greater performance (Boyne, 1998). The popularity and uptake of NPM is likely to be the most significant local government trend in regards to institutional values. With profit and efficiency being the driving values of the private sector, legitimacy is seen as merely a product of efficiency (Forgie et al., 1999). This is a contrast to traditional local government goals, which hold efficiency as one requisite of legitimacy, with the latter being the final, overarching goal (Kersting & Vetter, 2003).

A key aspect of NPM that is claimed to contribute to institutional legitimacy is the emphasis on accountability. More precisely, an emphasis on outputs and outcomes often results in legal requirements for local government to release information on commercial operations. While this is claimed to promote legitimacy, it fails to mitigate the harm that NPM measures can cause to the input and process legitimacy of public decision-making (Nalbandian et al., 2007). This is partially driven by the difficulties in accurately measuring these dimensions (Forgie et al., 1999). The effects on input legitimacy have resulted in criticism by academics such as Hansen, who states that “it is the political and constitution – the institutional form of government – that is at stake and being reorganised under the guiding principles of NPM” (Hansen, 2001, p. 2). In a similar manner as governance networks have the potential to constrict the influence of local government (as discussed in the previous section), the incorporation of NPM principles into local government (or governance) can limit the scope of collective and political decision-making as a result of ‘self-regulation’ and non-democratic mechanisms (Alba & Navarro, 2006; Forgie et al., 1999; Nalbandian et al., 2007). Interestingly, the debate around the Politics/Administration Dichotomy (as Section 2.3.3 discussed in detail) has been reopened by NPM theorists, with Nalbandian et al. claiming that it creates a “new distinction and separation of ‘politics’ and ‘administration’” (Nalbandian et al., 2007, p. 12). This claim, which so

unfortunately reveals an unfamiliarity of past experiences, introduces a pertinent effect of NPM. While Nalbandian et al. laud the complete separation of political and administrative control, Svava points out that relationships resulting from privatisation (whether full or partial) deviate from the Complementarity Model that he extols and instead uses a Politics/Administration Dichotomy in a manner unseen since the 1930s (Svava, 2001).

2.6 Conclusion

This analysis of literature has presented the historic and contemporary theories and debates around key topics in this research. To optimise the value of this research, it is crucial to build on existing knowledge bases and to align the study with current perspectives. While some areas have been explored to a great degree in the academic arena (such as governance, New Public Management and local government roles), others have instead been subject to close examination by a small group of academics. This increases the need to consider these topics in a critical manner, but does not hinder their role of stimulating thought and providing a base for this research.

Key findings from the literature include an evolution in relationship models, with a long-standing debate on the practicality of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy. Several key typologies were examined, which consider local government relationship from different angles. In addition, the Complementarity Model has been recently promoted as an alternative the established Politics/Administration Dichotomy and has been supported by the extensive U.Di.T.E Leadership Study, as well as numerous empirical studies by other academics. In addition to literature on local government relationships, research on institutional structures, roles, value integration, and current trends have also been explored. This revealed potential issues around the balancing of roles by elected officials, the increasing scope and complexity of local government, and a trend towards corporate-style management approaches.

The development of a research strategy and the examination of primary research in following chapters will build on the theoretical background that has been set out. As two examples of this, the relationship models and typologies will enhance the direction and development of questions in primary research; while the examination of research findings will be aided considerably by the international literature on roles, relations and trends within different settings. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Politics/Administration Dichotomy and

Complementarity Model due to their contrasts and this will allow for a comparison between councils as well as an evaluation of their applicability within New Zealand. Primary research is also expected to contribute to existing literature by further testing the usefulness of the Complementarity Model in relation to the more established Politics/Administration Dichotomy.

3 Research Strategy

3.1 Introduction

Building on the research aim, objectives and theoretical foundations, this chapter establishes the type of data desired, as well as the approaches taken to acquire and analyse this information. The epistemological research foundation is discussed, followed by the general approach and particular methods of data collection and analysis. The chapter then reflects on the evolution of the study.

3.2 Phronetic Research Foundation

In his study of the intellectual virtues extolled by Aristotle, Flyvbjerg (2001, 2004) examines *episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis*. This thesis uses this ideology to consider the type of knowledge being sought, which is essential in the selection and development of particular methods. In this categorisation of knowledge, *episteme* refers to scientific understanding, which can be abstracted into universal, context-independent theories (or truths) and has become “the modern scientific ideal as expressed in natural science” (Flyvbjerg, 2004, p. 285). While *episteme* has developed into the predominant scientific value, Flyvbjerg argues that its widespread adoption in the social sciences is extremely inappropriate, stating that “in the study of human affairs, there exists only context-dependent knowledge, which thus rules out the possibility of epistemic theoretical construction” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 71). That is, generalised universal theories are inapplicable to issues of human behaviour and should not be the goal of social science research. This thesis applies this lesson in the manner which data is collected and analysed, in order to ensure a link with the desired type of knowledge.

The second virtue, *techne*, is the art of production or application and is goal-driven, constructive, concrete, and context-dependent (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2004). *Phronesis*, the third intellectual virtue, stands in contrast to *episteme* (which is value-neutral) and *techne* (which inherently involves working towards predetermined values) by its focus on the construction and analysis of values. While the subject of this study, local government, predominantly applies *techne*, the study itself is less concerned with the production of certain physical outcomes than

elucidating value judgments within practice. This focus is aligned with a phronetic approach, for which the primary objective “is to carry out analyses and interpretation of the status of values and interests in society aimed at social commentary and social action” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 60). In the concept of phronesis, the focus on values is matched by an emphasis on practicality. These two elements converge in the four value-rational questions that should define phronetic research (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2004):

1. Where are we going?
2. Is this desirable?
3. What, if anything, should be done?
4. Who gains, and who loses, by what mechanisms of power?

These four questions have been assimilated into the research objectives of this thesis. The first is used by exploring the contextual background and current trends in local government research, although a lack of pre-existing research has necessitated an increased emphasis on the existing situation. The second question is approached by analysing the degree to which local government values are integrated into existing and emerging relationship structures. The question of ‘what should be done?’ is perhaps the least developed in this study, which instead attempts to enhance awareness regarding internal council relations in New Zealand. However, possible future research directions are also discussed. Lastly, both power mechanisms and the balancing of different interests (which naturally affect different people in different ways) play key roles in the topic of the study and are consequently integrated throughout.

Phronetic research principles have also been applied in developing methods. As the objectives deal with context-dependent issues which cannot include the induction or deduction of fixed universal theories, case analysis becomes essential for gaining any insight or understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Related to this is Aristotle’s view that experience is indispensable in gaining *phronesis*, as theoretical knowledge by itself is not enough to have practical understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Additionally, the use of case studies is related to the primary goal of phronetic research, which is “to provide concrete examples and detailed narratives of the ways in which power and values work in planning and with what consequences to whom, and to suggest how relations of power and values could be changed to work with other consequences” (Flyvbjerg, 2004, p. 302).

3.3 General Approach

When considering what primary research to undertake, it is important to consider research objectives. Objectives 1 and 2 are both influenced by New Zealand's legislative framework, as this sets the formal structure of local government and strongly influences roles and relations. Chapter 4 consequently examines this framework in order to understand these issues. However, there a multitude of informal and idiosyncratic factors that are expected to influence all three objectives and this necessitates a reliance on primary research. The predominant types of information required to meet the objectives are the opinions and experiences of those being researched; councillors and council managers.

Glesne (1999) presents three key elements that need to be considered when choosing research methods; getting the necessary data for understanding the issues in question, getting different perspectives on the issues, and making effective use of the available time. In order to achieve all three of these elements, a multi-method approach is chosen. Information on formal frameworks is predominantly gained by document analysis, while a survey and interviews are used to study the opinions and actual experiences. This combination of survey and interviews is expected to be most appropriate, as the quantitative survey will establish an overview of current situations which can then be explored and explained by more detailed interviews. This particular approach of combining case studies and surveys has been identified as an effective way of acquiring complementary types of information (Gable, 1994). The use of different methods is represented in Figure 3.1 below. In addition to acquiring different depths of information, the multi-method approach carries benefits from the triangulation of data. Triangulation helps to overcome the potential weaknesses of individual methods as well as contributing to validity, accuracy, and the holistic understanding of research issues (Berg, 1995; Denscombe, 2007).

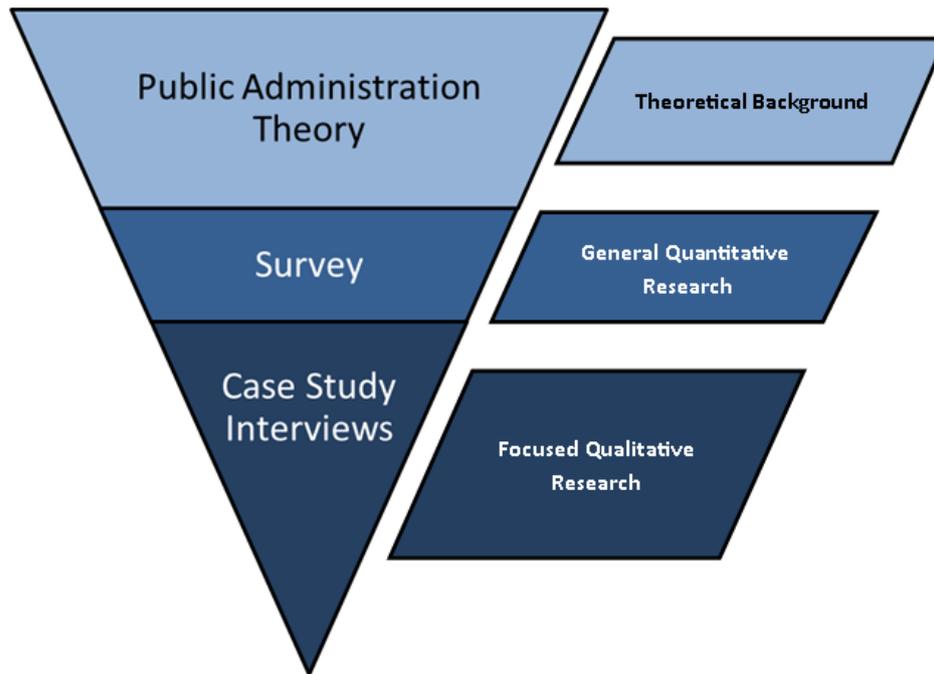


Figure 3.1 - Overview of Research Methods

It is appreciated that subjectivities held by researchers can affect the results and findings of a study. Consequently, there is a need for reflexivity in order to remain conscious of how the research may be affected (Denscombe, 2007; Gomm, 2004). This research was undertaken by a researcher who has little previous experience within the local government setting, but who still naturally holds values and views which impact on perceptions. However, a deliberate attempt was made to put these aside in the role as researcher and an open mind was retained throughout the study.

3.4 Survey

The primary research undertaken included a nationwide survey in order to establish basic, quantifiable data on the opinions of councillors and senior managers. The nationwide scale of the survey lends itself to a greater accuracy of representation by reducing the impact of local idiosyncrasies. The survey was developed with an aim of providing a rudimentary understanding of attitudes and viewpoints regarding inputs, roles, values, and relations within local councils. While some results were sufficient in explaining their particular concerns, many were explored further through interviews to elucidate their subtleties and rationales. The majority of questions sought to assess role priorities and test relationship models and typologies analysed in Chapter 2.

3.4.1 Question Design

The survey used a dual matrix table design for the majority of questions. This format, shown below in Figure 3.2, allowed the survey to enquire into respondent opinions on both the existing situation and the ideal situation, without visibly doubling the survey length. A five-level Likert Scale was used, with possible answers ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ and with ‘neither agree, not disagree’ as the central neutral point. Likert scale are useful for giving equal weighting to the answers of each respondent, while also promoting the survey as quick and easy for respondents to undertake (de Vaus, 2002).

Part 1 of 5

	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Councillors direct council policy-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff direct council policy-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors involve themselves in the technical administration of policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff consider social justice concerns in their administration of policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The key source of council legitimacy is the democratic representation by councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors are primarily driven by a desire for social legitimacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The technical skills and knowledge of council staff are the key source of council efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff are primarily driven by a desire for efficiency in their particular fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<< >>

Figure 3.2 - Example from Survey

Closed questions were used, as these are preferable when the data from different respondents needs to be compared (Gomm, 2004). A preliminary question on the position of the respondent (manager, councillor, or mayor) allowed for a comparison between groups when undertaking data analysis. Unfortunately, questions which are opinion-based (rather than having definite answers) are inherently more difficult for receiving accurate and useful information (Gomm, 2004). It is crucial for respondents to understand questions and overly technical wording needed to be avoided. However, the use of particular phrases was sometimes necessary to allow for a connection between the data analysis and the study’s theoretical foundations. These foundations were typically the driving basis for the development of survey questions. This allowed the research to draw on the current body of knowledge, while also ensuring useful results.

3.4.2 Survey Development and Execution

The survey was developed and undertaken using Qualtrics, an online survey program. This allowed for flexibility in the layout, a choice of question types, and ease in exporting data. A

physical copy of the survey is attached in Appendix A. While Qualtrics has an in-built function for sending survey invitations, a pre-test revealed issues with e-mails being classed as spam (unsolicited and unwanted mass e-mails) and automatically deleted by receiving mail clients. To avoid this being an issue, personal e-mail accounts were used to send invitations. However, this produced new issues. The university account which was used blocked a number of outgoing e-mails, most likely as a result of restrictions, designed to prevent sending spam, being breached. Finally, a personal e-mail account was used and worked without any issues. The success or failure of sending out invitations was recorded throughout the process and it is not expected that any significant amount of potential participants failed to receive an e-mail invitation. Internet surveys were used due to the low financial cost and speed of responses, both of which are making them an increasingly popular approach (Denscombe, 2007). There is a potential for bias due to differences in comfort levels around using information technology systems. However, studies have suggested that this does lead to any significant distortion to the nature of responses (Denscombe, 2007). This finding seems applicable to this study context, as there was only a small minority of potential respondents who did not have available e-mail addresses and the survey itself did not require any significant degree of proficiency in using the internet.

E-mail addresses of councillors and senior council managers were gathered from council websites and enquiries to council helpdesks. This method was very successful for getting contact details of councillors, as most websites had this readily available. However, e-mail addresses for senior managers were rarer and requests often had to be made for the survey to be forwarded to managers. A total of 1077 survey invitations were sent out, which resulted in 215 responses. These responses came from 81 managers, 16 mayors, and 118 councillors. However, the technical issues with sending survey invitations made it difficult to accurately state how many were received. Furthermore, the 1077 invitations do not reflect the total number of councillors and senior managers for two key reasons. Firstly, no attempt was made to define 'senior managers' and the inclusion of managers was made on a case-by-case basis (although the survey was aimed at the top two tiers of management). Secondly, many websites had no information on senior management and no enquiries were made to these councils. Consequently, it would be inappropriate to develop statistical confidence levels as it would be impossible to do this accurately.

3.5 Interviews

Case studies were used to expand on the survey findings and help provide a detailed understanding of different relationship structures. The key benefit of using case studies for this purpose is their suitability for analysing relationships, processes, and contexts (Denscombe, 2007). While there have been questions around the generalisability of case study findings, it is commonly recognised that the findings can be extremely useful in illuminating wider issues as long as it is done in a transparent and judicious way (Denscombe, 2007; Flyvbjerg, 2001). A useful approach is to consider transferability as an alternative to generalisability, which consists of “an imaginative process in which the reader of the research uses information about the particular instance that has been studied to arrive at a judgment about how fair it would apply to other comparable instances” (Denscombe, 2007, p. 299). Using *phronesis* as a foundation, the goal of the research is not to arrive at epistemological truths, but instead to elucidate factors within inherently context-specific issues. This combines with the concept of transferability to overcome the perceived issues of generalising case study findings, which are more of an issue of using results rather than inherent issues with the case study method (Flyvbjerg, 2004).

Four councils were chosen for detailed analysis, as this quantity provides a range of different approaches and enables a comparative analysis, while still allowing for a detailed understanding of each council. The first stage of choosing councils was to use data from the 2006 census to divide New Zealand territorial authorities into quartiles in respect of population size, geographic size, and population density (Statistics New Zealand, 2010a). After this, a grouping was worked out which included one council from each quartile for all three factors. These factors were incorporated due to possible influences on the nature of territorial authorities and this proved to be useful. For instance, councils with small populations were found to have different ideological and operational approaches to ensuring community representation. In addition to ensuring demographic representation, a purposive sampling approach was used to pick councils which were known to have very different operative approaches. This sampling approach is useful and commonly used for choosing particular cases which are more likely to provide the most valuable information (Creswell, 2007; Denscombe, 2007; Gomm, 2004).

Face-to-face interviews were undertaken for each case study. This included at least three interviews at each council, with a total of thirteen interviews. The participants comprised two

mayors, four councillors, three general managers, two CEOs, one third-tier manager, and one senior policy analyst. This range gave a good overview of different perspectives and allowed for triangulation of data collected within each council. Face-to-face interviews were used due to their ability to give richer and more detailed data than other research approaches (Denscombe, 2007). They also complemented the survey by assisting in the analysis of survey data. While the survey produced data on what views existed, the interviews helped explain why these views were held.

In contrast to surveys, which generate responses to a fixed list of questions, interviewing can involve “on-the-spot intuitive analytic decisions” (Gomm, 2004, p. 178). This was taken advantage of during the research, with a semi-structured format being used to promote a flexible interview style. This allowed participants to contribute to the direction of interviews and discuss relevant issues which had not been previously considered in research preparation. The topic areas which were used to guide the interviews were derived from the preliminary survey results and theoretical background. An example of the research links can be seen in enquiries about the Politics/Administration Dichotomy. After analysing the theoretical underpinnings of the dichotomy in international literature, the survey probed the level of support for the separation in the New Zealand context. After this, the views of interview participants were solicited and they were asked to expand on the reasons why they held those views.

Efforts were made to ensure the comfort of interview participants. This included guaranteeing their anonymity and the researcher’s neutrality. This was perceived as important for encouraging participants to be honest and open about their experiences and views, however there are inherent difficulties with evaluating the success of this effort. While there were no indications that any participants were dishonest, there was an impression that some refrained from candidly reflecting on certain issues that they perceived may have given their organisation, or themselves, a bad image. This often has the potential to impact on the validity of findings and consequently requires consideration in the data analysis stage (Gomm, 2004). All interviews involved discussing the ethical agreement that had been previously prepared, including checking whether the participants objected to having the interview recorded. The ethical arrangements have been approved by the Department of Geography at the University of Otago. The information sheet and consent form are presented in Appendix B and C, respectively.

3.6 Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, analytical methods were used to extract key findings. For the case studies, this predominantly involved transcribing the recorded interviews, then coding the documents based on the key themes from the interviews. These themes were then examined to establish both the similarities and differences between respondents and councils. The research objectives were used to guide the prioritisation of data, which is an essential stage of data analysis (Denscombe, 2007). However, the research process also impacted on the direction of the overall study and this affected the significance of different results. The evolution of the study is detailed in Section 3.7 below. The data analysis process goes beyond the presentation of findings and requires an interpretation and explanation of data (Denscombe, 2007). This involves using the theoretical background to interpret findings, as well as feeding these back into the theoretical framework.

Survey results were analysed using a largely quantitative approach. While some researchers analyse data from Likert scales as an interval rather than ordinal scale, this study approaches it as the latter (McCall, 2001). This method is used due to the inability to apply quantitative values to terms such as 'strongly disagree'. Consequently, while the rank order of possible responses can be inferred, the differences between the data points cannot be (Denscombe, 2007). Data analysis for the survey initially consisted of coding responses in a spreadsheet and consolidating the data into a summary of each question, an example of which is provided in Table 3.1 below. From this, the broad views were evaluated and results of interest were explored further by reviewing neutral responses and separating agree/disagree responses from *strongly* agree/disagree. While mayors were originally treated as a distinct group, the small number of responses meant that results were unlikely to be representative and they were consequently incorporated into the councillor group.

Table 3.1 - Example Survey Analysis

Statement: There is an overlap between the functions of councillors and council staff		
Question 1: Does the statement reflect the current situation?		
	Yes	No
Managers:	44%	37%
Councillors:	46%	35%
Total:	45%	36%
Question 2: Would the statement be true in an ideal situation?		
	Yes	No
Managers:	23%	56%
Councillors:	31%	33%
Total:	28%	41%

3.7 Evolution of Research

It is important to recognise and appreciate the evolution of research, which needs to be flexible while remaining pertinent to the aims and objectives. There have been numerous factors which have influenced the direction of this study. The research aim and objectives originated from an initial desire to study local government relations and their effect on value integration within councils. This was refined by a preliminary analysis of literature, which was then worked into the New Zealand research setting to create the current objectives. These then drove the theoretical background presented in Chapter 2. However, the research direction was impacted upon by a variance in the degree to which different aspects had been previously examined. This was significant due to the desire to develop a practical connection between research findings and the prior body of local government theory. In order to retain this connection, the research direction changed to fill a void in pre-existing studies while ensuring the ability to build on past research.

The findings from the theoretical background helped develop the survey questions and interview topics. However, research themes were restructured as new factors became apparent and issues were reprioritised. Specifically, the focus on how councillors and council staff integrate different values was reduced, as it became apparent that the structure of local government in New Zealand puts the role of balancing community values almost entirely in the hands of councillors. Interview respondents almost unanimously stated that the values pursued by their councils directly reflected those held by the community. Furthermore, respondents implied that value setting is not undertaken by either group, but is instead

naturally transmitted through councillors. As the importance of values within council relationships were downplayed by respondents, the focus of research questions instead turned to other aspects. The use and impacts of council controlled organisations and contracting *as alternative relationship models* was one particular key aspect which became increasingly apparent and consequently received increased attention as the research progressed. Overall, there was a trend towards downplaying the balance of legitimacy and efficiency and moving to a broader focus on the causes and effects of different relationship approaches.

This evolution is depicted in Figure 3.3 below.

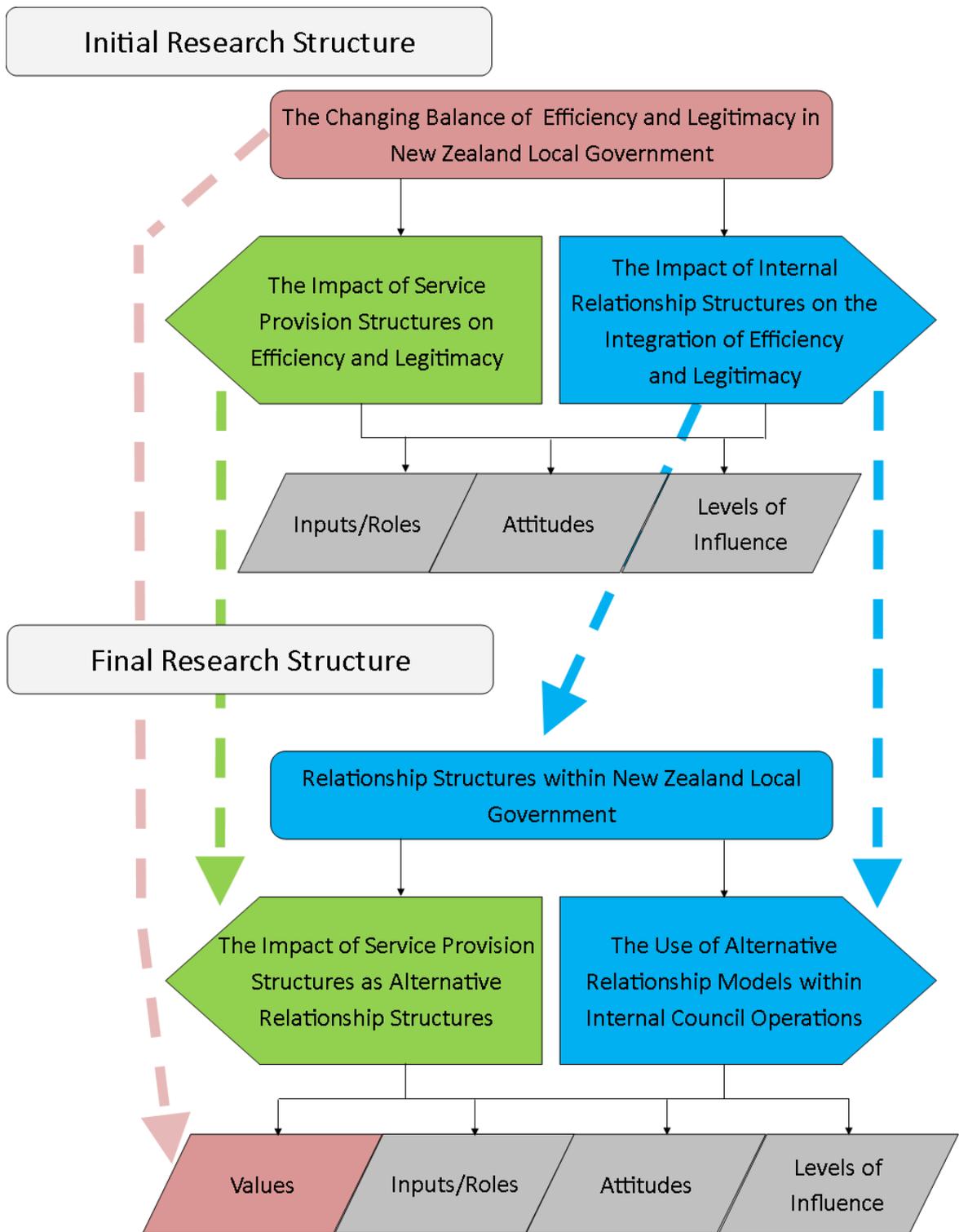


Figure 3.3 - Evolution of Research Structure

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the methodological approach taken in this study. To summarise, a phronetic approach was taken to develop both the aims of the research and the methodology. The methodology predominantly involved collecting and analysing both quantitative data from a nationwide survey, as well as qualitative data from case study interviews at four councils. This multi-method approach allows for triangulation of data and different degrees of depth in the information gathered. The evolution of the research has also been presented in order to show how different aspects have shaped the final direction of this study. Following this section, Chapter 4 will analyse New Zealand local government, in order to provide an understanding on the research context and begin answering the research objectives.

4 Local Government in New Zealand

4.1 Introduction

Before considering the results from the primary research, it is necessary to examine the setting that the study is based in. The theoretical background in Chapter 2 explored work related to the research objectives on a broad, non-contextual level, while this chapter focuses on work within the New Zealand context. This work is utilised and combined with an examination of the statutory framework to explore the roles and relations within New Zealand's institutional structure. This includes examining its history, current form, and issues surrounding the representative role of councillors. The chapter leads on to Chapter 5 and 6, which combine it with the theoretical background and research results to explore the research questions.

4.2 New Zealand's Institutional Form

4.2.1 History

Local government in New Zealand has experienced significant change over the last three decades. This change came after a long, stagnant period of institutional duplication and fragmentation, when the determined neo-liberal crusade of the 1980s resulted in the Local Government Amendment Act 1989 (Thomas & Memon, 2007). This amendment consolidated the 850 local authorities into 74 territorial authorities and 12 regional councils (Drage, 2008; Thomas & Memon, 2005). Reforming the local government structure to create improved economies of scale has been a continuous theme in New Zealand, while also being inevitable due to the past plethora of local authorities. To illustrate this, New Zealand had 2,125 local authorities in 1892, with 13,981 elected positions serving a general population of only 630,000 (Bassett, 1997). This historic desire for large ratios of electors to election positions, which is seen as a key indicator for democratic governance, has been continuously decreasing due to the exuberant costs of maintaining the local government structure. The 13,981 elected positions in 1892 had dropped to 2,234 in 1989 and to 1,699 in 2007, while the New Zealand population has been in constant growth (Drage, 2008; Statistics New Zealand, 2010a).

In addition to institutional consolidation, the Local Government Amendment Act 1989 introduced a division between governance and management by separating roles and creating a new requirement for CEOs. This was driven by a perception that the mandate for councillors had been too broad and that their interference into the administrative realm resulted in inefficiencies (Drage, 2008). The Local Government Amendment Act 1996 then strengthened financial accountability and transparency, while extending the separation of governance and management (Drage, 2008). These measures were heavily influenced by the international movement towards New Public Management, which (as Section 2.5.3 discussed) focuses on creating more efficient and market-influenced management policies. New Public Management measures also tend to approach legitimacy as an entirely output-centric issue at the expense of input-legitimacy. While reforms and local government critiques have been heavily concerned with roles and values, the basic institutional structure has been relatively constant (Thomas & Memon, 2005). The dominant features of the current form (which is discussed in more detail in the following section) can be traced back to the origins of New Zealand local government. When the Dunedin City Council was first established in 1865, it used a ward-based council of eight elected officials and a separate, directly-elected mayor, an institutional form which is still dominant throughout New Zealand almost 150 years later (Drage, 2008; Forgie et al., 1999).

4.2.2 Physical Form

As set out in the LGA and the Local Electoral Act 2001, New Zealand uses the popular council-manager form, with elected officials taking the overtly political roles and the staff undertaking the administrative roles (Cheyne, 2004; Drage, 2008). In territorial authorities (city and district councils), the structure features a 'weak' mayor, without the executive powers or veto rights given to those within the 'strong mayor' institutions of other countries. The distinction of mayors from other councillors is largely ceremonial, but includes the role of presiding council meetings and acting as a discernible civic leader (Cheyne, 2004; Drage, 2008; Forgie et al., 1999). Regional councils (which are not included in this study) use a chairperson rather than a mayor, with this person being elected by the councillors from amongst themselves (Forgie et al., 1999). In addition to this, regional councils have a greater focus on the physical environment and consequently could be perceived to have a more technical nature than territorial authorities. A comparison of institutional value integration and balancing as a result of these differences (together with various others) falls outside of this study, but could yield interesting results in future research.

Both territorial authorities and regional councils are required to hire a CEO, who is the only employee of the elected officials and who hires the rest of the council staff (Drage, 2008; Haidar et al., 2009). This disconnection between the elected officials and the general staff results from the amendments discussed in the previous section, which sought to separate governance and administration. Section 41(2) of the LGA sets out the responsibilities of CEOs; which includes implementing council decisions, providing advice to elected officials, and employing council staff. Despite a call to legislate the roles of councillors in the LGA, the roles were left undefined to allow local flexibility (Cheyne, 2004). The effects of this are discussed in Section 4.3.

Community boards are used by most councils to reinforce the relationship between the council and specific communities (Forgie et al., 1999). While the nature of community boards differs between territories, they predominantly have a representative role and act as an intermediary to ensure community concerns are raised before their respective council (Drage, 2008). New Zealand's use of community boards can be seen in a similar way as the backbench councillors within the UK local government system. This stems from their mandate to represent the community while lacking any intrinsic endowment of decision-making influence (Drage, 2008). However, the local government framework allows flexibility for councils to determine how community boards are utilised, primarily by granting an ability to delegate a degree of decision-making authority and grant budgets for local expenditure (Forgie et al., 1999).

As shown in Table 4.1, a low proportion of New Zealand's government spending is expended in the local government realm. This is a consequence of the local government role for service provision being much smaller than in the majority of other countries, due to the exclusion of fields such as policing and education (McKinlay Douglas Limited, 2006; OECD, 2009). The proportion of total government spending by the local government realm only increased by 0.2% between 2000 and 2010, suggesting little change to the structural form (Statistics New Zealand, 2005, 2010b)

Table 4.1 - OECD Government Spending by Level (data from OECD, 2009)

Comparative Spending of Governmental Levels (2006)				
	Local Government	Central Government	State Government	Social Security
Greece	6.3	53.7	0.0	39.9
New Zealand	10.7	89.3	0.0	0.0
Luxembourg	11.5	45.9	0.0	42.6
Austria	12.2	45.7	15.1	26.9
Portugal	12.9	54.1	0.0	33.0
Spain	13.4	22.4	35.8	28.5
Belgium	14.1	23.2	23.6	39.1
Germany	15.2	19.1	21.9	44.0
Slovak Republic	17.5	48.4	0.0	34.1
Canada	19.3	29.6	45.6	6.1
Ireland	19.7	69.7	0.0	10.6
France	20.2	35.0	0.0	44.7
Switzerland	20.9	14.8	33.7	30.6
Hungary	24.7	49.4	0.0	26.0
Czech Republic	27.5	60.3	0.0	12.3
United Kingdom	28.4	71.6	0.0	0.0
Poland	30.7	35.4	0.0	33.9
Norway	31.2	68.8	0.0	0.0
Italy	31.5	33.5	0.0	35.0
Iceland	31.7	50.0	0.0	18.3
Japan	31.9	33.8	0.0	34.4
Netherlands	33.5	29.5	0.0	37.0
Finland	39.2	29.9	0.0	30.9
Sweden	44.8	43.9	0.0	11.3
Korea	45.5	40.4	0.0	14.2
Denmark	63.3	31.8	0.0	5.0
United States	0.0	56.3	44.9	0.0
OECD	43.9	8.2	24.4	23.6

4.2.3 Council Controlled Organisations

A key impact of New Public Management principles on New Zealand's institutional form is the use of council controlled organisations (Hanley, 2010). These are organisations that have local authorities as majority shareholders or as holding dominant control (New Zealand Government, 2002). Council controlled trading organisations are similar, but have profit making as their purpose. Council controlled organisations are being increasingly used to manage council operation, usually in efforts to improve efficiency (Drage, 2008; Hanley, 2010). Two key concerns surrounding the use of these organisations are the effect on democratic control and the deviation from traditional local government objectives (Hanley, 2010). The former is derived from the increased distance between the elected officials and operative management (Drage, 2008). As Hanley points out, it can result in "elected representatives becoming managers of managers rather than representatives of communities" (Hanley, 2010, p.

11). The reshaping of local government objectives is a result of the increased priority given to commercial objectives and the redefining of citizens as consumers (Hanley, 2010; Thomas & Memon, 2005).

4.3 Roles of Councillors

4.3.1 General Overview

The statutory flexibility surrounding the roles New Zealand councillors, combined with the large influence of personalities and local idiosyncrasies, creates difficulties in examining roles and relations within local government. Indeed, only 65% of councillors and council managers actually understand the boundaries of local government roles and responsibilities (Local Futures, 2005).

While the LGA avoids designating councillor roles, it does require local councils to develop individual governance statements every three years (as per the election cycle) in order to define roles and decision-making structures (Drage, 2008). Unfortunately, this has not had the desired result, with 87% of councils using a template supplied in the 'Know How Governance Guide' and avoiding setting individual delineations. Consequently, the councils nominally support the general four-sided role classification of councillors. These four functions are setting the policy direction of council, monitoring council performance, employing the CEO, and representing the interests of the city/district (Drage, 2008). While these can act as a starting point, councils have almost all failed to build on these by discussing their practical implementation.

Looking beyond the roles of councillors, their ability to effectively undertake these roles is very difficult. One key issue involved is the relatively large number of councillors. In a study by Howell, McDermott and Forgie (1995), 77% of respondents felt the amount of councillors hindered council relationships. This viewpoint was a key factor in the recent restructuring of Christchurch City Council, which included reducing councillor numbers from 24 to 13 (Drage, 2008). This was applauded by many as a progressive step towards more skilled councillors who would focus on policy and stay removed from administration. However, the response after implementing the change was considerably negative, as the expected shift in councillor behaviour and relations failed to eventuate (Drage, 2008).

Another key obstacle in councillor effectiveness is the increased complexity of local government, a trend that was discussed in Section 2.5.1. Recent statutory amendments have increased financial management provisions, increasing the technical nature of decision-making and consequently redistributing authority away from councillors and towards senior management (Drage, 2008; McKinlay Douglas Limited, 2006). This is exacerbated by the council employment structure, with the council relying on advice by the CEO (although independent advisors can be commissioned for individual issues), increasing the CEO's influence and the dependence of councillors (McKinlay Douglas Limited, 2006).

4.3.2 Complexity of Councillor Positions

The increased complexity and the desire for corporate-influenced management within local government have impacted on the roles of New Zealand councillors. As Forgie et al. (1999, p. 84) succinctly point out, "councillors have the difficult task of identifying what the public wants, reconciling these wants between conflicting sectors, and then delivering them in the most cost effective way to maximise the benefits to the community". As this role definition suggests, councillor positions are highly difficult to navigate and the lack of prerequisites calls into question the ability for an untrained layperson to successfully meet this challenge. The position of councillor is also often misconstrued by the public and the candidates for elected positions. A study by Drage revealed considerable differences between how candidates perceive the job and their experiences after being elected. Candidates tend to expect representation to be the dominant responsibility, while the formal decision-making and governance processes are often more demanding than expected (Drage, 2008). These issues have resulted in the recent promotion of councillor training (Daya-Winterbotham, 2004; Drage, 2008).

In 2004, collaboration between the Ministry for the Environment, Local Government New Zealand, and the University of Auckland Centre for Continuing Education resulted in the development of the 'Making Good Decisions' programme (Geertshuis, 2009). This is an accredited programme aimed at teaching the skills and knowledge required for decision-making under the RMA (Ministry for the Environment, n.d.; University of Auckland Centre for Continuing Education, n.d.). The Resource Management Amendment Act 2005 introduced the requirement that all chairs of hearing panels and a majority of hearing panel members must have accreditation under Making Good Decisions (Ministry for the Environment, n.d.). An evaluation of this programme by Geertshuis resulted in a general commendation. While it is difficult to measure the quality of decision-making, Ministry for the Environment observers

have commented on a noticeably improved commitment to natural justice and more effective questioning. In addition, self-ratings (on a scale of 0-10) were acquired before and after the training programme to evaluate the confidence in statutory decision-making processes. The results of this are shown below in Table 4.2 and show a strong improvement.

Table 4.2 - Impact of Making Good Decisions (Geertshuis, 2009, p. 9)

Experience – (number of hearings)		Self-rating pre-training	Self-rating post-training	Gain
Less than 10	Mean	3.4	6.5	3.1
	<i>N</i>	73	73	
10-49	Mean	4.5	7.3	2.8
	<i>N</i>	50	50	
50 or more	Mean	5.8	7.9	2.1
	<i>N</i>	47	47	
Total	Mean	4.4	7.2	2.8
	<i>N</i>	170	170	

(Geertshuis, 2009, p. 9)

A second impact of the increased complexity of local government decision-making is the use of certified commissioners in resource management hearings, in place of councillors. The strength of this trend is the ability to use commissioners that are skilled in either general resource management processes, or in the particular field being examined. It has also been claimed that this would improve the consistency, objectivity and quality of the decision-making process (Daya-Winterbotham, 2004). However, the use of commissioners has drawn criticism by academics and professionals who believe that it deviates from community representation and consequently the key roles of local government (Daya-Winterbotham, 2004; Drage, 2008).

4.3.3 Consultation

Over time, New Zealand has sought to enhance legitimacy by significantly increasing requirements for consultation (Cheyne & Comrie, 2002; Forgie et al., 1999). While issues regarding optimal consultation methods and the effectiveness of consultation in general have been given substantial consideration, the impact on the role of councillors remains unclear (Cheyne & Comrie, 2002; Drage, 2008). The increasing consultation requirements have been matched by a reduction in councillor numbers and increases to the workloads involved in policy-making (Drage, 2008). These have combined to partially reallocate the mandate of incorporating community concerns to council staff rather than councillors.

In addition to widespread academic support for public participation, local government legislation focuses on ‘enabling’ communities (Cheyne, 2009; New Zealand Government, 2002).

However, many councillors and decision makers perceive public members as being unable to grasp complex issues or hold views that transcend individual interests (Coote & Lenaghan, 1997). A 1994/95 study of councils by the Department of Internal Affairs showed that 36% of councillors felt that the quality of ideas generated by consultation was of 'little or no' value, while 54% felt it led to 'few or no changes' to plans. However, 77% felt consultation was of 'some or good' value for informing the public and 82% felt it was of 'some or good' value for institutional accountability (Forgie et al., 1999). This reveals a token, one-way process that is failing in the statutory mandate of enabling community decision-making.

The uncertainty over the enabling capacity of consultation is paralleled in the representative function of councillors. Councillors often view consultation as redundant due to their elected position, with one response in the Local Futures survey stating that "people are on the whole uninterested in our planning and decision making because they elect us to make the decisions and do the job" (Local Futures, 2005, p. 161). However, a low and declining voter turnout is an entrenched issue for councillor legitimacy, as Table 4.3 shows. The post-1995 mean for voter turnout is 48.8% of the potential voting population, in contrast to a mean of 66.3% in Europe for the same period (Department of Internal Affairs, 2008a). In addition to low voter turnouts, elected officials often receive a relatively low portion of votes, with an average of 21.2% of enrolled voters supporting each mayor in 1998 (Forgie et al., 1999). These limitations have a significant impact on the representative legitimacy of elected officials, whose decisions cannot be presumed to be a result of popular support.

Table 4.3 - Voter Turnout in Local Government Elections 1989-2007 (data from Department of Internal Affairs, 2008a)

	1989	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004	2007
Regional Councils	56%	52%	48%	53%	49%	45%	43%
District Councils	67%	61%	59%	61%	57%	51%	49%
City Councils	52%	48%	49%	51%	45%	43%	41%

4.3.4 Composition of Elected Officials

The representative legitimacy of councils is significantly weakened by the social composition of elected officials, which is far from characteristic of wider New Zealand demographics. The table below shows some key differences and reveals a tendency for councillors to be male, over 50 years of age, New Zealand European and relatively affluent. In addition to demographic

differences, it is likely that certain personality types are more likely to stand for council. While this is much more difficult to analyse (largely due to the inability to use quantitative data), the Department of Internal Affairs has studied the reasons for standing for council. Although this is not synonymous with studying councillor personalities, it does allow for a reserved consideration of councillor predispositions. The foremost reason reported was a desire to serve the community (with 44% of candidates placing it as their primary reason), suggesting a beneficial civic commitment (Department of Internal Affairs, 2008b). However, the second most common primary reason was 'dissatisfaction with the way things are run'. Although those stating this reason were less likely to be elected, the relatively high amount of dissatisfied candidates would increase the likelihood for councillors to take a challenging attitude within council.

Table 4.4 - Council Demographics (data from Department of Internal Affairs, 2008b)

Characteristic	Councillor Composition	National Demographics
Male	68%	48%
Aged over 50	76%	39%
Self-employed	29%	8%
NZ European	90%	66%
Household Income over \$70,000	50%	35%

4.4 Conclusion

Local government in New Zealand is both simple and flexible in relation to other countries. The relatively small amount of responsibilities is managed by a council-manager form, within which councillors are allowed to negotiate different roles. However, these roles are increasingly complex and the lack of statutory guidance allows both contextual idiosyncrasies and macro-scale trends to freely influence empirical experiences. Key implications of the council-manager form include particular value being placed on professionalism and a large degree of influence being given to managers relative to the strong mayor form. These are both expected to have significant impacts on the nature of relationships in New Zealand councils, although a comparative international study would be required to fully understand the particular consequences.

The New Public Management movement has triggered the use of increasingly corporate-style approaches to local government and has primarily manifested itself in the use of council controlled organisations. The relationship between these organisations and their respective councils offers an interesting comparison to internal council relations. As the use of council controlled organisations is an increasing trend, the resulting relationship structure is given particular attention in primary research. Additionally, the complexity of councillor roles and the effects of consultation are also focused on as a result of their contextual relevance. There is a potential difficulty for councillors to handle increasingly technical issues and research consequently attempts to address this and examine whether it affects the formal or informal power held by staff. The results of primary research are discussed in the following two chapters.

5 Council Structures

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses results of the primary research and discusses the relevance of the findings in relation to public administration theory. The focus of this chapter is on four relationship structures employed in New Zealand territorial authorities; hegemonic in-house, interactive in-house, service contracting, and council controlled organisations. The inclusion of these four structures is due to their prominence in the case studies analysed and their variety of effects. Each approach results in different values being prioritised and different operational styles being used. The analysis of these approaches is undertaken to emphasise the importance of evaluating the effects of relationship structures, in addition to providing key issues for these evaluations.

The four key structures are presented as empirical embodiments of the relationship models discussed in Chapter 2. The support and use of a hegemonic in-house structure is based on the traditional values of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy (PAD), while the discovery of interactive in-house relationship approaches reflects Svava's newer Complementarity Model. The use of service contracting and council controlled organisations stems from values that have connections to PAD and tend to result in an extreme form of the dichotomy. The differences in the origins and outcomes of the four relationship structures are explored with data from the survey and case study interviews. This emphasis is complemented by the following chapter, which continues to present and analyse results around the values, power relations, and roles within in-house council relationships. The position of this chapter within the wider scope of the report is shown in Figure 5.1 below (shaded in red).

The overarching purpose of this chapter is to address Objective 1:

Objective 1: To analyse the variety of relationship structures operating within New Zealand territorial authorities.

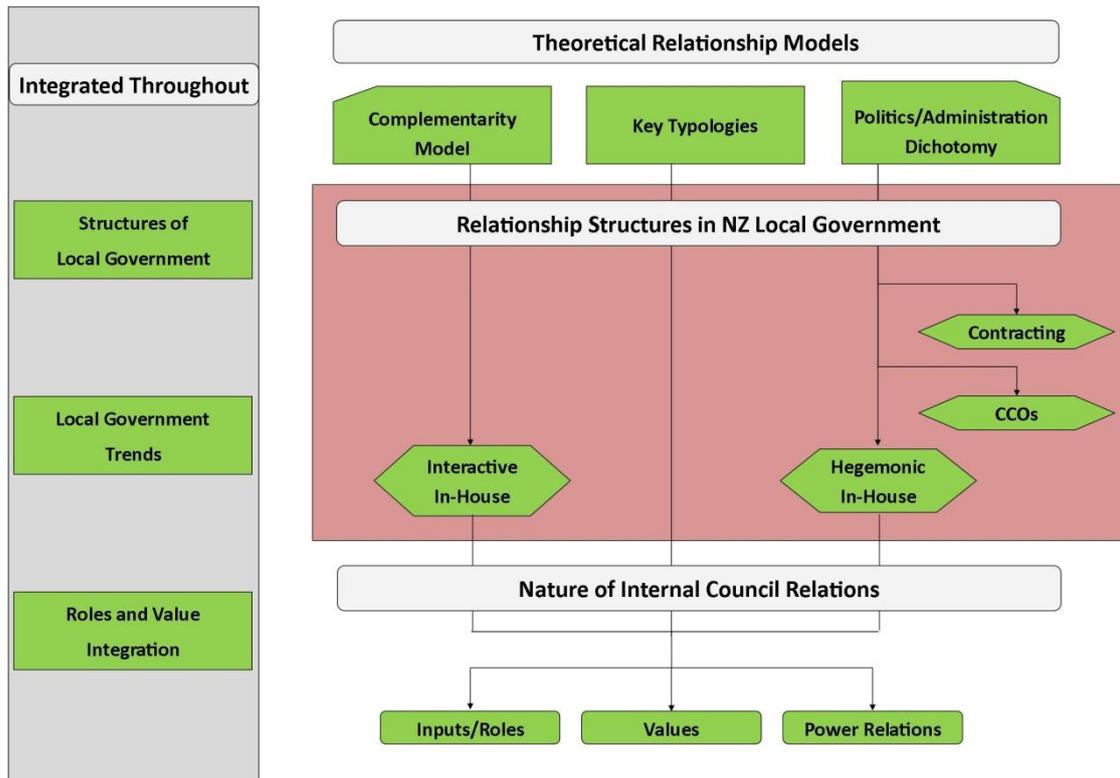


Figure 5.1 - Chapter 5 Linkages

5.2 Hegemonic In-House

A dominant feature in territorial authorities is a hegemonic relationship between councillors and council management. While there are instances where a council may have a hegemonic relationship foundation while not maintaining a Politics/Administration Dichotomy (and vice versa), the relationship approach and role division are often found together. The division of roles between the political and administrative realms received a large degree of support in the survey undertaken, with 90% of responses supporting it as an ideal. Figure 5.2 below depicts this support and the slightly lower, but still dominant, view that PAD is representative of the current situation. The respondents who felt that their council does not currently have a strict separation between realms were very vocal in the comments of the survey, often attacking the other group for exceeding their appropriate role. One comment summarises the common view by stating that “things only go wrong when councillors try to become managers, or managers try to become councillors”. The connection of the PAD to a hegemonic relationship came across most strongly in interviews with councillors. It was evident that many councillors held a

subconscious and simplistic view that the division of roles inherently lends itself to a separation and hierarchy of processes.

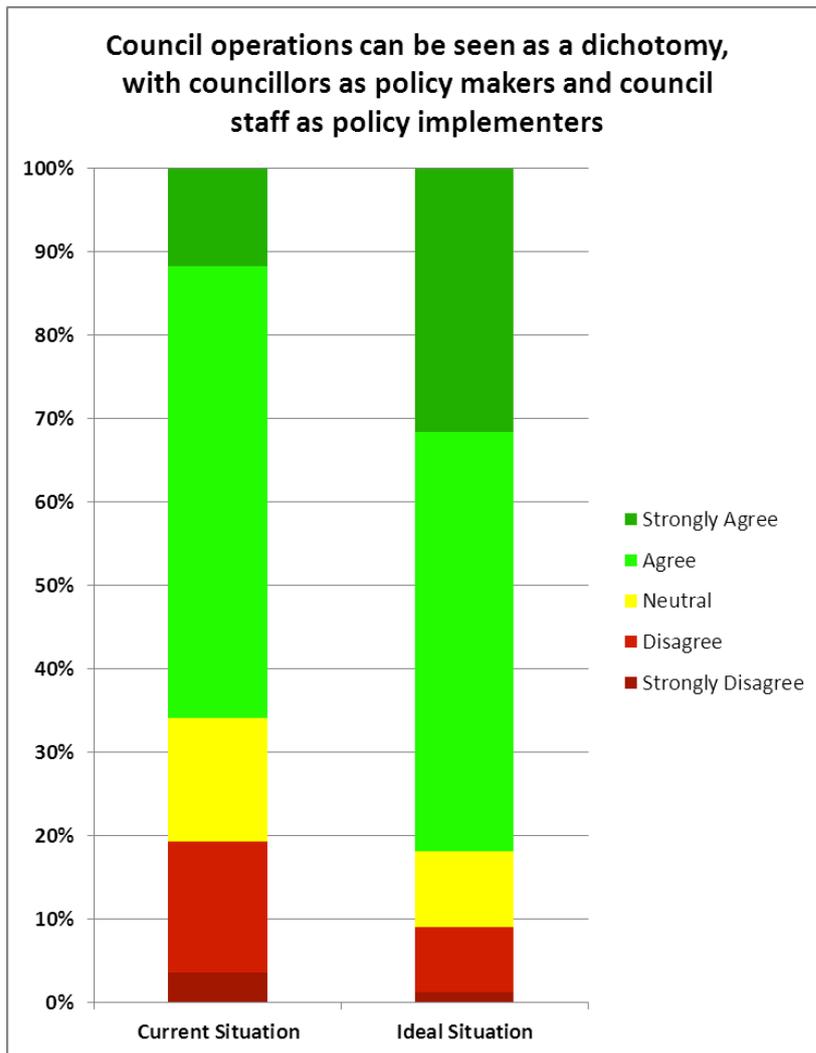


Figure 5.2 - Support for the Politics/Administration Dichotomy

The hegemonic relationship structure is far more common in larger councils. This was observed in a comparison of case study authorities and confirmed in a number of survey comments. One such comment was that “relationships between elected members and staff are different in large councils. In smaller councils elected members and staff interact closer. Large councils, such as the new Auckland (Council), become impersonal - creating a ‘them and us’ relationship”. The disconnection within large councils was also discussed by interview respondents (Key Informants 5; 12). This two-sided system carries both strengths and weaknesses. A key strength is the ability for staff to follow a unified councillor direction (Key Informants 3; 8). One councillor points out:

Sometimes those two do work quite well together, but I suppose in general, if you have 13 councillors all feeling like they have the right to give their input into what the management structure should be, or what the staff should be doing and their job descriptions, or whether they should be driving X, Y, or Z vehicle, I suppose that wouldn't be a tenable situation for a staff person to be in, feeling like they had 12 people to answer to. So I suppose it's to ensure that the people in those roles, the management roles and staff, can sort of do their job without going crazy with 13 different bosses. (Key Informant 8)

This simplification of command and accountability is established in the role of CEOs. The significance of this role was often raised in both survey and interview findings. The intermediary role is particularly significant within a hegemonic relationship structure, as they can often decide on the information that is passed from one group to the other. In a perfect situation, this shields the 'hands-on' workers from political interference and allows for councillors to receive politically neutral advice on policy issues (Goodnow, 1900; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Svava, 1999; Wilson, 1887). However, the role creates the potential for CEOs to exploit their power to achieve certain ends, as discussed theoretically in Section 2.4.3 and empirically in Section 6.4. The high number of councillors criticising the power CEOs hold suggests that Peters' Administrative State Model reflects the situation in some councils. This model is based on the technical knowledge of staff giving them a larger degree of influence in decision-making than elected officials. While staff often have the potential to use their advice and knowledge to control council decisions, this is typically counteracted by respect for the role of councillors. Consequently, the criticisms of technical knowledge being used in power relations suggest low amounts of respect or trust for councillors to adequately fulfil their duties. This lack of trust was revealed in survey comments such as: "councillors are often lacking the knowledge and sophistication to make good decisions on complex issues". The importance of trust was raised frequently, however many were comments discussing the strength of their council relationships due to this trust.

A common and significant weakness in the separation of the two groups is the disconnection from processes until they reach the other's 'realm'. Having councillors only involved in a final stage of weighing up decisions is detrimental to decision-making processes and can result in a feeling of impotence. Numerous survey comments by councillors confirmed this, with one remarking that they "are often just called on to sign off staff recommendations with too little opportunity to have input at the policy formation stage". In addition, some councillors feel that the reports that they receive are not adequate for making informed decisions and are frustrated by the perception that they are lacking information and access to staff. However, these views were only held by a minority of councillors, suggesting that the presence of

interactive processes (discussed in the following section) often overcome potential disconnections.

When asked why the separation between the political and administrative realms was so highly supported, interview respondents held various different views and were often uncertain as to their reasoning (Key Informants 2; 4; 8; 9). However, it is apparent that the separation supported within New Zealand is not the strict one discussed in the Theoretical Background. Instead, it resembles the 'reinterpreted dichotomy' within Mouritzen and Svava's Separate Role Model, which allows for a certain degree of influence into each group's realm. This can be seen in a statement made by a CEO:

It's not like never-the-twain-shall-meet, it's still got to be a team-based effort. I think it's 20-80 thing myself. I think there's a 20% input required, particularly by myself as chief executive, into the political area... and likewise there's 20% input needed by the political into the operations area. And neither party needs to feel threatened or usurped, it's just the way it's got to be to make effective use of the skills that are on offer. (Key Informant 1)

Supporting the idea of a reinterpreted dichotomy, it was found that even councils which initially appear to have a relatively strict separation between councillors and management often have informal and discreet links. The following quotation by a senior manager shows the pragmatic realities that tend to underlie the relationship:

I actually don't think they go through separate processes here in New Zealand. No staff member can realistically expect to have a proposal accepted without lots of prior conversations with the elected arm. It would just be naïve to think you could. You get some CEOs who think they can, they don't last very long. It's all about communications, trade-offs, discussions... a lot of it's just exchange of information back and forth, understanding what it is that's going on, on both sides. (Key Informant 1)

However, the informal nature of these connections has the risk of excluding certain parties. While more formal interactive methods (discussed in the next section) can also be exclusive to a central group of influence, they tend to be more transparent and their formal construction requires a certain degree of acceptance by the wider council. Informal interactions can instead lead to a dominant group of councillors (usually including the mayor) holding closer relationship to senior management than others. These issues support Svava's idea that the presumed manifestation and simplicity of PAD can lead to true situations, which are intrinsically more liberal than the strict PAD, being overlooked or misunderstood. The nature

and structure of links between groups need to be clear and defined, in order to prevent improvised and suboptimal methods being adopted.

The presence of decision-making cliques was found in both the largest and smallest local territory (in terms of population), with all four respondents from the latter explicitly referring to the mayor and CEO as the main decision-making unit, with the partial addition of committee chairs. As one manager indicated, “in small authorities like (this), you’ll probably find it’s the domain of the mayor and one or two senior trusted lieutenants, along with the chief executive and one or two senior managers, that tend to drive the policy development” (Key Informant 5). However, this was not seen as an issue by respondents from this council, who alluded to an acceptance from other councillors (although this was not confirmed). The main purpose of a main decision-making unit was seen as practicality, due to perceptions that small groups work better and are a more efficient use of councillor time. The size of councils also plays a significant role in this regard, with different expectations for the time commitments of councillors.

Looking at survey results, excluded councillors often consider themselves powerless and unable to fulfil their responsibilities, as shown in the comment:

As a new Councillor I am forced to rely on staff and the CEO for information, which, if I am not co-operating the way they want me to, becomes harder to access. I find some of our management work hard behind the scenes to cultivate their relationships with Councillors who agree with their agenda. There is a massive lack of professionalism in that arena.

A key variable within hegemonic relationship structures is the attitude taken by management. Managers can either submit to councillors in a politically responsive manner, push their own views on the public good, or be professionally neutral (B. Buchanan, 1975; Haidar et al., 2009; Keating, 1995; Pullin & Haidar, 2003). Without exception, every manager interviewed expressed a willingness to follow councillor desires out of respect to the democratic system. The view is best expressed by one manager’s statement that “in my case, I would make it clear if I disagree and why I disagree, but ultimately if a decision is made, it has to be implemented. If you step beyond that line, you’re becoming the policy maker and you have no legitimacy to do that” (Key Informant 3). It was explicitly stated by this manager that the only exclusion would be if illegality was involved, strongly supporting a neutral viewpoint (Keating, 1995). Additionally, many managers interviewed declared that they would firmly put forward any professional opinions and ensure this was recognised before accepting and implementing the

decisions of council (Key Informants 1; 3; 6). These findings show a general congruence between the common attitude of New Zealand council managers and the dominant theoretical principles discussed in Section 2.4.3. However, respondents also pointed out that many managers act in a manner found under models which are not as popular, acting as either independent/trustee or dependent-political/responsive agents.

There is a general recognition amongst councillors that staff would find it difficult to implement something that they strongly disagree with and have the potential influence to hold it up. As Key Informant 8 pointed out, “it goes against human nature to just be a robot, no matter whether you’re a council worker or whatever your position is... and we don’t want robots”. So while management predominantly follows councillor desires, there may be times, depending on the personalities and issues involved, where the staff choose to ignore councillors or work against their viewpoints (Key Informants 6; 8; 12). Instead of necessarily being a negative aspect of the relationship, however, it can act as a check and balance against the “impetuous nature” of some councillors and indifference of others (Key Informant 8; 12). Nonetheless, it would be inappropriate for staff to ignore a decision which received common support from council and a balance must be retained.

While it is the role of staff to provide advice to councillors, there are disagreements as to the aspects which should be considered. In particular, most respondents (both councillors and managers) felt that staff should completely avoid considering councillor desires and views and give their own professional opinion regardless (Key Informants 2; 9; 12). This follows the neutral management approach, which has received general support in numerous studies, including the U.Di.T.E Leadership Study (Haidar et al., 2009; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Pullin & Haidar, 2003). However, interview respondents emphasised that this is not universal and pointed to instances when staff have even been asked to change reports (Key Informants 2; 6; 9). While efforts to make staff retract or change professional beliefs are certainly inappropriate, a similar pragmatic view was put forth by other respondents. Specifically, this was that proposing or supporting politically unviable ideas is unproductive and naïve and should be avoided (Key Informants 4; 5; 9). One CEO was open about the need to consider political concerns:

I often have to screen reports and say ‘look, that’s just going to create a headline, that’s going to cause angst in the political dimension, we don’t want that’ because you just don’t want a naïve staff recommendation that may subscribe to best practice but doesn’t actually connect with the people out there, it’s just going to cause the council grief and if it won’t get off first base, it won’t be included (Key Informant 5)

An analysis of interview data from these informants shows a subscription to the 'dependent professional agent' stance discussed in Chapter 2. While neither view is inherently right or wrong, including political concerns in the options and advice put forward to councillors is always contentious and should consequently be transparent. A more appropriate approach is for staff to consider and report community interests and support in their advice, while leaving the decisions concerning their balancing to elected councillors (Key Informants 2; 9).

5.3 Interactive In-House

I think one of the fundamentals of good policy, policy which actually makes a difference, really does rely on that close interaction between the councillors and the staff and the commonality of view or consensus of view of working towards the same goal (Key Informant 6)

The administrative hierarchy and the separation of roles do not always result in a separation of processes. While some councils rely on formal reports and councillor meetings, there are usually issues which are discussed within workshops and other similar arrangements. A CEO interviewed presented the following situation for interactive processes between councillors and staff when developing policy or responding to issues:

They (councillors) often will do briefings, will do workshops, will do informal sessions that are designed to promote a free and frank exchange. So that you can get everything on the table and they're pretty informal. The formal meetings that you see advertised in the newspaper as occurring every six weeks are more about the culmination of a series of informal comings and goings and emails and the odd correspondences, there'll be phone call discussions. For example, I have a fortnightly meeting with my chair and deputy chair on matters of interest in (my) sector. We'll pick up ideas in there and develop them a little bit and grow them a little bit and some don't go anywhere. Out of that we start to build up a picture of where we want to go. It's quite organic really. In some ways the early parts of it are quite unstructured. (Key Informant 1)

This reveals a pragmatic and informal sequence which feeds into the formal processes. While this has the ability to create opaque and clique-based decision-making, it also contributes to well-informed and balanced decisions that take advantage of the skills of both groups. These benefits can also be gained by workshops, which can overcome the issues of councillor exclusion. Respondents from councils utilising workshops, without exception, have supported their use and found them to be very useful for both groups. However, the current situations within councils vary greatly in the degree to which workshops are used. While some councils

use them only for large policy and plan developments, others utilise workshops for "anything and everything" (Key Informant 8)

A key benefit of workshops is the ability for staff to educate councillors about technical issues in an environment in which councillors feel comfortable to ask any question and put forward any suggestion (Key Informants 1; 4; 5; 8; 11; 13). The appreciation for workshops is summarised by Key Informant 4:

We do have a reasonable number of (workshops) because some issues are quite complex for a councillor to make a really informed decision. Quite often you need to be able to talk through the issues and, from our perspective, workshops... are really in confidence meetings where there are no members of the public and there's no media. If you have a complex issue and you need to ask what may be an obvious and stupid question, they can all feel free to ask that. If they want to throw up a left-wing idea, that's a good place to do that because it can be worked through...

While transparency is becoming an increasingly exalted value, this view shows the often underappreciated issue that the public and media spotlight on councillors can have a negative impact on council processes. Numerous councillors referred to their unease (which can reach the point of fear) to speak out about unfamiliar issues while media (and/or public) are present. However, this did not hamper their appreciation of the need for transparent processes. This can be overcome by holding a subsequent debate in the public-included council meetings, in which councillors are all fully informed (through the workshops), while the council as a whole is yet to make a decision (Key Informants 5; 8; 11; 12). However, this does not always happen and respondents point to councils who make final decisions in workshops which are then merely ratified in formal meetings (Key Informant 11).

The issues that are discussed in workshops tend to be those which do not need explicit formal resolutions (Key Informants 3; 8). Instead, workshops are usually aimed at allowing councillors to contribute in the development of a policy or plan. This can be seen in contrast to instances where councillors are given a report directly before a meeting and asked to choose between predetermined proposals. Key Informant 8 points to linkage between the process-based, educational, and interactive natures of workshops:

We workshopped all the activities that we're putting into our long term plan. We workshopped all of those, like the managers would put a presentation saying 'here's how we do roading, here's what we think we'll do in the next 10 years, do you have any major issues with that?' So we workshopped that stuff, because it wasn't part of a meeting that

needed a resolution or anything, it was just to tell us 'here's what we're going to put into the activity plans'. And that's good, because you can't do that in a formal meeting, you can't learn about roading in a meeting, it's not the purpose of the meeting.

The informality of the process means that the consequent actions need to be examined. After workshops, staff are generally responsible for integrating the views received into their processes. While this may be easy if there is one clear viewpoint, the possible multiplicity of councillor views and general lack of overarching resolutions makes it a potentially difficult job for staff to undertake (Key Informant 8). However, many respondents declared a high level of trust between councillors and staff which leads to co-operative team-focused processes and attitudes. This trust is crucial for informal processes, as it acts as an alternative to the strict, hegemonic structure discussed in the previous section. The goodwill between groups and the desire to receive and incorporate each other's views leads a better integration of their respective strengths and is conducive to creative solutions (Key Informant 5). As one informant points out, "if you just bring in a standard policy paper with a recommendation to them and they're almost cold dealing with it, then they can struggle and I can understand why they would" (Key Informant 3). This highlights the importance of the interactive relationship structure and of inclusion throughout processes.

It was recognised by some respondents that the different roles and inputs of the two groups can be best integrated by shared processes. The survey comments written in the most positive style were those praising the teamwork, collaboration, and respect for each group. To illustrate this, a survey comment from a new councillor stated their approval of the collaboration and partnership between councillors and staff in their council, which coexisted with an appreciation for the role division. This reflected wider views of respondents, of which 64% felt there was a mutual respect between staff and councillors. Of this group, 85% agreed that the mutual respect lead to self-moderation. This lends support to the Complementarity Model, which predicts this occurrence. However, this does not represent the environment of all councils, with 28% of respondents feeling the two groups vie for authority and influence and 14% feeling there was a lack of mutual respect. While this does not necessarily reflect a hegemonic relationship, power struggles and lack of respect are very likely to hinder positive interaction. The two predominant complaints within the comments related to the perceived high level of power held by staff and the breach of the governance/administration divide by either group. The contravention of roles suggests an absence of trust for the other group to adequately undertake their responsibilities.

The formal hegemony and the role of CEOs as the sole intermediary are often thrown off in interactive relationship structures. The following statement reflects this, as well as the benefits of doing so:

I was told when I did my training in Wellington (Making Good Decisions)... 'As councillors you employ the CEO, and that's the only person you talk to. You do not talk to anyone else in the organisation other than the CEO'. And in practice, in our council, that's just does not, would not, happen, because our CEO would prefer us to talk to the people that we need to talk to because that's more efficient than him channelling everything through. But some CEOs would definitely hold on to that they would be the mediator and they would channel everything backwards and forwards. But it doesn't happen in our council. (Key Informant 8)

It can consequently be interpreted that the New Zealand setting uses the formal/legal hegemony as a back-up for council relations, on which more positive, interactive relationships can be built. A mayor of a small council attested to this by stating “it's been very much a collaborative area, although when push comes to shove, we all retreat to what we should be doing” (Key Informant 12). The defined hierarchy is required to firmly establish the roles of each group, protect from political interference, and ensure that decisions are being made by elected officials who represent and are accountable to the public. These values are entrenched into the public administration culture of New Zealand, with both the interviews and survey showing a strong (almost blind) acceptance for the current structure. This appreciation for the structure and the related roles of each group leads to respect and a sincere approach to council relationships in the majority of cases.

While this study has focused on workshops, they are not the only interactive method used within councils. For instance, working parties are also used in many processes. Most councils examined also had working parties for various issues. These were usually chaired by a councillor, but also driven by a senior staff member (Key Informant 12). The members of the working parties varied, with some consisting completely of councillors, while others involved a mixture of staff and councillors or, alternatively, public members and councillors. Key Informant 6 points to the strengths of these interactions:

The working parties tend to be three or four councillors and staff and that is more sitting around in a room and talking about the options. The staff still provide the advice and things but there's more of an interacting discussion or debate rather than the committees where staff recommend things and council makes a decision. So in terms of policy development... the working parties are where you've got councillors and staff working together to try and solve something where the roles are still clear that, at the end of the

day, it's the council which makes the decisions and it's the staff which gives advice, but you have a lot more interaction

This approach benefits from continuity of interaction, which workshops often lack. However, the typically low number of councillors on working parties usually inclines the process towards relatively uncontroversial issues.

These interactive relationship structures support Svava's Complementarity Model. They are typically based on the pursuit of shared goals, recognition and respect of each group, and combining their strengths. This approach is conducive to creative decision-making processes (Key Informant 5). In addition to the research findings supporting the model's applicability, the positive experiences of councils using this model supports its utility as an ideal.

5.4 Service Contracting

Contracting local government services to private companies is common practice in New Zealand councils and has become the norm for areas such as road maintenance (Key Informant 8). Contracting creates an alternative relationship structure to the in-house form, with this structure resembling an extreme version of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy. The policy development and administration is typically separated, with all aspects of the relationship (such as roles and expectations) being predetermined and legally entrenched in a legal contract. The purpose of this section, as well as the next, is to elucidate both how the choice of relationship structure reflects institutional values and how council (or council-initiated) operations are shaped by the different relationships.

5.4.1 Comparison with In-House Service Provision

The councils researched varied in their use of contractors. Notably, one council chose to minimise the work that they contracted out and instead attempted to undertake as much service provision in-house as possible (Key Informants 4; 5; 12). This philosophy is predominantly driven by the CEO, who stated that they are "old fashioned and proudly so". Respondents from this council argued that their in-house services are of a superior quality to those found elsewhere and the 'old fashioned' approach is consequently seen to be invaluable (Key Informant 5; 12). Within this view, in-house services hold a deep sense of value for getting successful results for the community, while contracting firms have no incentive to exceed the

specified minimum standard or develop innovative long-term solutions (Key Informants 5; 11).

This view is summarised by Key Informant 5:

We found that our workers were doing a great job, they really value the role they provide, they really take pride in their work. That can be hard to engender sometimes in contracting. It does give it that legitimacy and the people like it, they see the workers out there, they know the people, they see them toiling away in all weathers for the good of the community. And they know, like the water guys, they know the network. If there's a problem on the weekend, they're there. Peace of mind from my point of view.

Other benefits of in-house departments include the ability for council to hold more control over service delivery, as well as the retention of local and corporate knowledge (Key Informants 11; 12). Potentially resulting from these benefits, the service scoring the lowest rating in the resident satisfaction survey for this council is one of the few which is contracted out, while in-house services are scoring highly. While this is not necessarily correlated or able to be extrapolated, this finding supports the potential benefits of in-house services over contracting.

5.4.2 Public Good within Service Contracting

Respondents held a variety of perceptions regarding the impact of contracting on operational values. One senior manager interviewed felt that the established methods of accountability for the four well-beings (social, cultural, economic, and environmental) protect these values in contractor operations (Key Informant 4). This manager felt that the values are considered at the stage of contract tendering and potential contractors “would know what our expectations are and they would have to show that they could measure up to that” (Key Informant 4). However, this view was disputed by other respondents, who felt that there is a strong potential for contracted services to operate with significantly less regard for community values and desires (Key Informants 8; 11).

A key issue with service contracting is a further disconnection from the public. While councillors hold a clear accountability for council actions and operations, the use of contractors adds another layer and the institution responsible for any issues can be unclear. This is linked with the reduced control, which also results from the additional layer of responsibility and procedures. These issues can be overcome by best-practice contracts and a good relationship between the council and contractors (Key Informant 2).

The use of a legal contract to formally establish roles and expectations hinders the ability for amorphous 'public good' values to be integrated (Key Informant 8). As one councillor stated:

You can't just say 'well even though it might take you longer, we want you to do this, like take the bin back to the doorway for an elderly person. So in Palmerston North where they do the service, they could do that, while we wouldn't be able to, you can't put that onto a private entity if it's going to cost them more money and they're not going to recoup it (Key Informant 8).

This view reflects that in-house service provision departments have different foci than private enterprises and will consequently act differently. Another example of this was given by an interviewee at a different council from Key Informant 8, who stated:

A lot of council staff, you'll see them in here on the weekend and going to meetings and doing a lot of things that are part and parcel of the community good. It's expected by the public. Our building inspector's a good example of that, he would go out and do building inspections himself on a Saturday or a Sunday because that's when the contractors coming to put the concrete down (Key Informant 11)

However, this view was not unanimous. Another view was held that contracting services can be "both efficient and legitimate, if properly managed" (Key Informant 2). This relies on a well-structured contract that incentivises contractors to carry out services as efficiently as possible while also integrating the public good into their operation. This depends, in part, on setting a price which allows the contractor to make a reasonable profit without sacrificing the quality of their service delivery (Key Informant 2).

5.4.3 Choice of Structure

Respondents pointed to legislative requirements to prove efficiency as a key reason for contracting services out, both due to a desire for market competition and a difficulty in validating the efficiency of in-house processes (Key Informant 4). The particular area of service delivery is another key factor in deciding on the appropriate structure of delivery. Roading services, for instance, benefit from economies of scale which private firms can obtain easier than individual councils, as they often service larger amounts of roading networks than found in any particular district (Key Informant 11). However, other services are much less appropriate to contract out, for a variety of reasons. These include services which would not gain the same saving in efficiency, essential services which are important to hold control over, and services which hold a social value which the community prioritises over possible savings

(Key Informants 8; 11). Due to this multitude of related issues, the decisions of particular councils inherently reflect a balancing of efficiency, quality of service, and retention of control. The importance of technical context described by interview respondents supports the theoretical findings, in which one academic states that:

Unless it is reserved for services that can be appropriately defined without ongoing broad-based administrative input and appropriately delivered without continuous political oversight, the strict separation of policy makers and service deliverers can lower the quality of governance and service (Svara, 2001, p. 5).

5.5 Council Controlled Organisations

The fourth relationship approach examined is the use of council controlled organisations (CCOs). Like contracting, CCOs typically involves separating an operations unit from the wider council. However, the majority ownership held by the council creates a different relationship than with contractors. Another point of difference is the reasons for establishing a CCO. While contracting aims to take advantage of market competition and sometimes economies of scale, CCOs do not tend to gain from these. Instead, CCOs are typically established to create efficiencies by using a more corporate-styled approach. However, this is often done by shedding processes which can be seen either negatively as overly bureaucratic, or positively as contributing to democratic safeguards (Key Informant 11). Like contracting, this has resulted in a variety of views around the suitability of CCOs as a management structure (Key Informants 3; 10). This is matched by a variety of operative styles in which CCOs are used, resulting from differing goals. While council controlled trading organisations (CCTOs) are common for commercial services outside the core scope of councils, the use of CCOs for managing essential services has been more contentious. This latter structure has the potential to improve efficiency, but councils need to both retain a degree of control and integrate the public good into the overarching mind-set of their companies. However, it is important to note that a certain size is necessary for CCOs to be considered (Key Informant 1). In addition, more technically complex services are more suited to a separation of social/political expectations and the efficiency of operations. This is the result of the expertise involved in the political inputs and in the technical outputs being further apart from other services (Key Informants 1; 11). CCOs, along with service contracting, are the current empirical embodiment of New Zealand's use of New Public Management. The issues around New Public Management raised in the international literature include the integration of political values and the balance between economic efficiency gains and the potential negative impact on social legitimacy (Forgie et al.,

1999; Nalbandian et al., 2007). These issues need to be kept in mind when examining New Zealand's experiences with this management approach.

5.5.1 Efficiency and Control

CCOs are seen as more efficient by the majority of respondents for a number of reasons. One is that they can act and react faster than councils, due to a reduction of political and bureaucratic barriers (Key Informant 11; Forgie et al., 1999). A senior manager in the largest council studied pointed to the cost of democratic administration, such as responding to Official Information Requests, on their organisation (Key Informant 1). When considering whether to use CCOs, the financial cost of such processes needs to be weighed up with their contribution to the legitimacy of the council. An implication from this is that services which simply function correctly (or do not) are more appropriate to put into a CCO than those with more complex social legitimacy concerns (Key Informant 1). This arises from the benefits to efficiency arising without counterbalancing concerns around social responsibilities.

Other potential benefits include the use of a board of directors, which typically consist of business-savvy individuals who are adept at creating efficiencies within corporate systems (Key Informants 6; 11). This is in contrast to councils, which are perceived as being inefficient due to a lack of competition and the overarching control being held by democratically elected laypeople that do not necessarily have business-related skills (Key Informant 11; Boyne, 1998). The use of CCTOs in controlling multiple commercial entities can also produce benefits from co-ordinating between individual entities. An example of this was given by one councillor interviewed, whose council operates two venues which had previously competed with each other:

... therefore they're undercutting for (events)... so in the end we said 'look, there's a smarter, more efficient way of doing this, let's set up a company which will run both those things... and the most appropriate venue will get the most appropriate event and we can market them together... It will put in efficiencies. (Key Informant 11)

However, these benefits do not always eventuate and respondents often pointed to attempts which have failed to produce these (Key Informant 7). The most often cited example is the experience of Queenstown-Lakes District Council (Key Informants 5; 6; 7; 11). This council currently has two CCOs, mandated with providing recreational services and consent processing, as well as a CCTO charged with operating Queenstown Airport (Key Informants 3; 7; 10). Queenstown-Lakes District Council drew attention by becoming one of the first councils

to fully contract out consent processing in 1998. However, in 2007 the council established a CCO to purchase the contracted firm and undertake its functions (Key Informant 10). The key reason for transferring consent processes from a contractor to a CCO was to regain a greater degree of control (Key Informants 5; 10). This shows an inability for a legal contract to fully enact the expectations of a council regarding how a service should be operated. The development of using a CCO has resulted in Queenstown-Lakes District Council regaining some control, although there are still calls for the council to reintegrate the service into an internal department. The interactions between council and CCOs include occasional meetings with the boards of directors, the selection of directors, financial reports, legal contracts, and statements of corporate intent (Key Informant 3). While the councillor and senior manager interviewed considered these methods to be adequate in influencing CCO operations, it was mentioned that other councillors felt themselves to be powerless despite their apparent public accountability for CCO actions (Key Informants 3; 10). Key Informant 3, discussing the issues of accountability and control, stated:

It's almost getting to the ultimate of setting policy and then sending people away to go and implement it and (there is) little connection between the two, very tenuous, sort of remote control. Again, getting back to councillors and what their role is, some are relaxed about that and others are much more nervous and concerned. From a councillor's point of view... often the buck still stops with them even if it's an action of a CCO. So you can understand why at times they can be a little confused or frustrated that they don't have the control that they feel they need.

Contributing to this was a commercial decision that the CCTO running Queenstown Airport made without consulting council (Key Informant 10). This decision was to sell a large amount of shares to an outside organisation, which resulted in a significant community uproar. While it is arguably appropriate for CCTOs to make commercially sensitive decisions without seeking permission, this instance revealed their ability to make politically-laden decisions which can go against public desires. Looking back at the past experiences with consent processing, one staff member stated that:

I think it was almost like a trend and that at the time everyone thought 'oh it's more efficient, council staff just stand around chatting' and all the rest of it. And now it's been proven and seen that it doesn't really work so well. It can work in some situations, I think Lakes Leisure (the CCO in charge of recreation services) works a lot better... but that's because it's a service that's slightly removed from your everyday thing, whereas a regulatory service is very much part of a council and what people expect from a council. (Key Informant 7)

The enthusiasm for semi-privatising responsibilities such as regulatory services in the 1990s was identified as a trend by several key informants, who all considered it as a failure or as exceeding the prudent use of CCOs and contracting (Key Informants 3; 6; 7). It is apparent that this trend was driven by the neo-liberal desire to embrace the efficiencies of market competition and corporate management styles. However, these attractions were complemented by the perception that local councils are inherently inefficient, a perception that was never necessarily based on facts (Key Informant 11). These motives resulted in contracting and CCOs which were fully separated from councils, while current attitudes and lessons from past experiences have led to a recognition that councils need to retain control and set the operative style of any auxiliary service provision structure (Key Informant 1). This requires more linkages and a closer relationship between CCOs and councils, which in turn allows communities to have more input into operations (Key Informant 11). The need for close connections and control corroborates the theoretical viewpoints given by Hansen (2001), who highlights the role of elected officials of integrating social expectations and values into governance institutions.

5.5.2 Changing Goals

An analysis of interview data shows that views regarding CCOs and CCTOs tend to blur the differentiation. Within the discourse of the interviews, CCTOs were almost always called CCOs by both councillors and managers. This may contribute to the negative views some respondents held when discussing the potential for standard CCOs to manage core services. For instance one councillor stated that “in my personal view, I would never put water or sewerage into a company, because at the end of the day every company has to make a 10% return” (Key Informant 11). This stipulation is not a requirement of standard CCOs, which only need to have profitability as a goal if designated as a CCTO (New Zealand Government, 2002). The use of CCTOs to make a profit from areas which are not necessary council services needs to be seen as a separate issue than the use of CCOs to operate essential services. While the appropriate role of councils in economic activity is debated, it is an issue that is placed beyond the aims of this research, as this uses the current legislative mandate given to councils under the LGA 2002 as a key foundation. The view given by a senior manager below summarises the commercial use of CCTOs:

The existing CCOs are really, in the main, commercial businesses operating. And they are set up as CCOs because they weren't really core council services. Running a forestry company, a bus company, half an airport, other things that aren't really core council businesses... so the CCOs then were created basically as vehicles, saying 'these are

companies that we own that aren't local government service providers but provide a revenue stream to the council to offset rates'. So it was a different sort of component back then (Key Informant 6)

5.5.3 Essential Services

Essential services, in this thesis, consist of those which the community have strong expectations for the council to provide, such as water provision, sewerage, and development regulation. The expectations of the community tend to make the management structure of these services to have a significant political dimension. The argument against the use of CCOs for these services, based on the need to retain to control, was presented succinctly by one councillor: “with water, the motive should be the best service and the best quality of water that we can get for the money that we're spending and that's the community good really and that should be left with the ratepayers and with the council” (Key Informant 11).

An alternative stance is taken by respondents from a larger council who are currently considering transferring water-related responsibilities to a CCO (Key Informants 1; 6). There is a recognition in this council that the nature of the CCO would need to be considerably different from their current CCTOs.

The difference between that CCO and other CCOs (is that) the other CCOs I describe as being passively managed by council, they're only really interested in the revenue from them... The difference though, is that the council remains a very active owner of the entity and effectively a regulator of that CCO. So the council will go 'we own you, this is what we want you to deliver, and this is what we're going to pay you' and then the board of the CCO then makes decisions within that structure on how to deliver those things... including the community outcomes aspect of it (Key Informant 6).

This approach to CCOs involves a fundamental difference from in-house relationship structures. While in-house roles cannot be separated into foci on legitimacy and efficiency (as Chapter 6 discusses), this separation can be seen in the relationship between councils and this style of CCO. This is in contrast to the current Auckland Council CCO, Watercare, which has been described as “an entity unto itself... they've really lost that connection of legitimacy with the people they're serving. It's become a commercial business” (Key Informant 6). If successful, this interactive relationship structure could allow for councils to integrate the essential aspects of democratic legitimacy while exploiting the benefits of corporate management approaches. This approach resembles the Politics/Administration Dichotomy and satisfies the key reasons behind the dichotomy, such as the protection of bureaucrats from adverse political

interference. However, the retention of substantial degrees of control and input by council are crucial in maintaining a balance between legitimacy and efficiency.

5.5.4 Integrating Public Good

Despite the potential issues for incorporating the public good into CCO operations, respondents from councils with CCOs typically felt that it has been integrated well in their instances. For instance, the CCO charged with Queenstown-Lakes District Council's consent processing has stipulations within its Statement of Intent. One such specification is for the CCO to provide free advice for people lodging simple applications, in order to ease the financial burden of applying for consents (Key Informant 10). This idea was agreed upon in discussions between the CCO and council, with the Statement of Intent providing an appropriate means of formalising the requirement. However, there is an appreciation that the public good is "diminishing because there's some (financial) pressures on the CCO" (Key Informant 10). A similar example was given in a second council, with the chairman of a CCTO stating: "we still try to be good citizens and we do our own sponsorships and things like that" (Key Informant 11). As part of this, the CCTO has co-ordinated and co-funded a very successful subsidisation scheme for home insulations. Another method of incorporating the public good is the approach taken to operations within this CCTO. This includes developing infrastructure which is sensitive to its environmental setting and aesthetic impact, in addition to economic factors (Key Informant 11). Both of these initiatives originated within the CCTO itself, which is largely influenced by council appointments to the board of directors, which also includes councillors. These examples show the ability for council controlled organisations to operate in a manner which fulfils expectations in both social legitimacy and economic efficiency.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analysed results of the primary research and discussed the relevance of the findings in relation to public administration theory. The focus of this chapter has been on four relationship structures, which reflect different values and have strong links to the theoretical models discussed in Chapter 2. Results show a very strong support for keeping governance and management apart, but many councils also extol the benefits of interaction and shared processes. There is no fundamental contradiction in this, although the combination of interaction and separate roles requires respect between groups, good interpersonal skills, and a knowledge and appreciation of the respective roles. A key pitfall is the unstructured

interaction between certain groups, while others are excluded. This can be overcome by the formal establishment of interactive processes, such as workshops.

While the interactive in-house relationship is the optimal approach for some areas of council operations, others are more suited to being either contracted out or managed by council controlled organisations. These services tend to be less controversial in nature and gain greater benefits through economies of scale. However, the decision to use a relationship model which has less interaction and a greater separation between policy development and implementation needs to be made with a thorough consideration of how this prioritises different values and affects the balance between control and efficiency.

6 Internal Council Relations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses survey and interview results relating to internal council roles, values, and power relations. This builds on the discussion in the previous chapter, as well as the theoretical background (Chapter 2) and contextual research (Chapter 4). Figure 6.1, below, shows the position of this chapter (highlighted in red) within the wider report structure. It predominantly builds on the discussion on interactive and hegemonic in-house relationships, but also incorporates issues relating to the structure of councils, current trends, and the values incorporated into local government. The purpose of the chapter is to address Objectives 2 and 3:

Objective 2: To evaluate the inputs, roles, and role perceptions of councillors and council staff in decision-making processes.

Objective 3: To evaluate the degree and manner in which decision-making by councillors and council staff reflect different values.

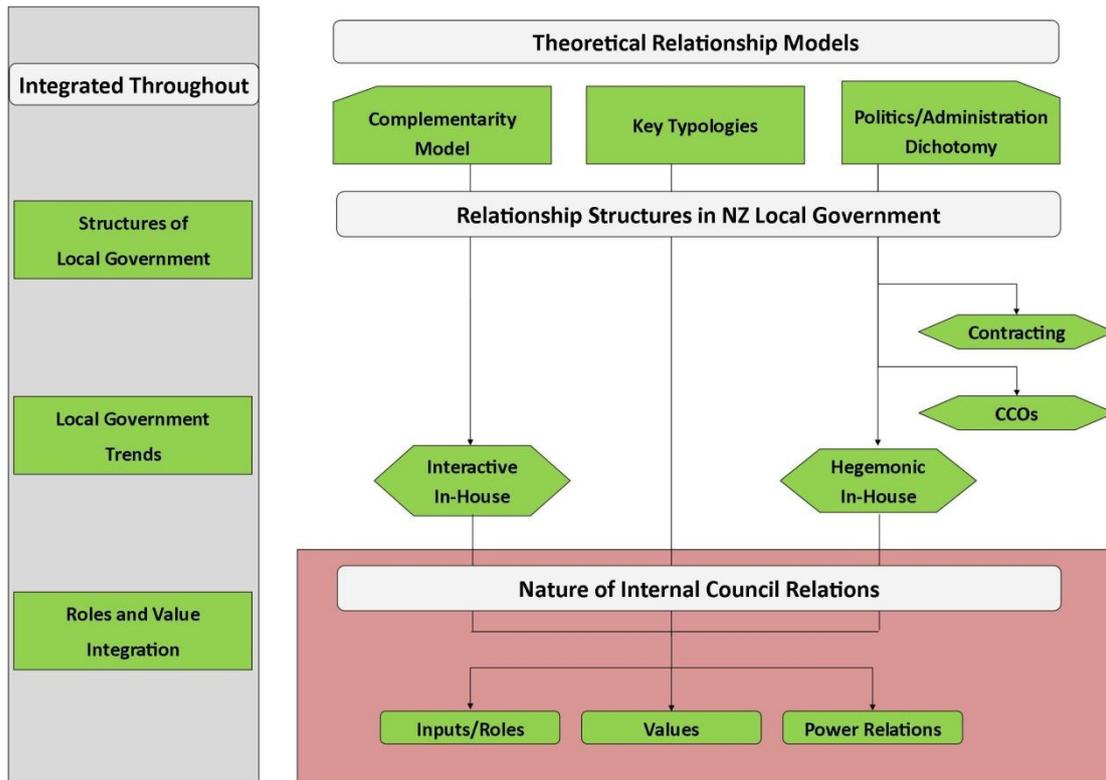


Figure 6.1 - Chapter 6 Linkages

6.2 Roles

6.2.1 Role and Input Based Separations

The recognised importance of having an understanding and respect for the respective roles of councillors and staff was ubiquitous throughout the collected data. However, survey results show significant differences in the perceptions of each group. These are presented in Figures Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3 below. As Section 5.1 discussed, there was a strong support for a Politics/Administration Dichotomy in both practice and theory. Despite this, 35% of managers felt that councillors involve themselves in the technical administration of policy, while only 4% felt they should be doing this. Councillors, as a group, believed that they were much less involved than this (only 14% felt they were), despite 19% considering that they should be involved. The fact that 19% believe they should be involved suggests that there is a group with either a lack of trust in staff or a lack of understanding regarding their role. In terms of current practice, the different perceptions both groups hold in relation to the other's involvement in their realm partially supports Peters' Adversarial Model. This model also gains support from

the numerous survey comments bemoaning the power and involvement of the other group. When asked directly about this model, 28% of respondents agreed that the two groups vie for attention and influence. While this is a minority of respondents (compared to 49% who disagreed), it is a significant portion and demonstrates that the relationship between councillors and staff is suboptimal in a number of councils.

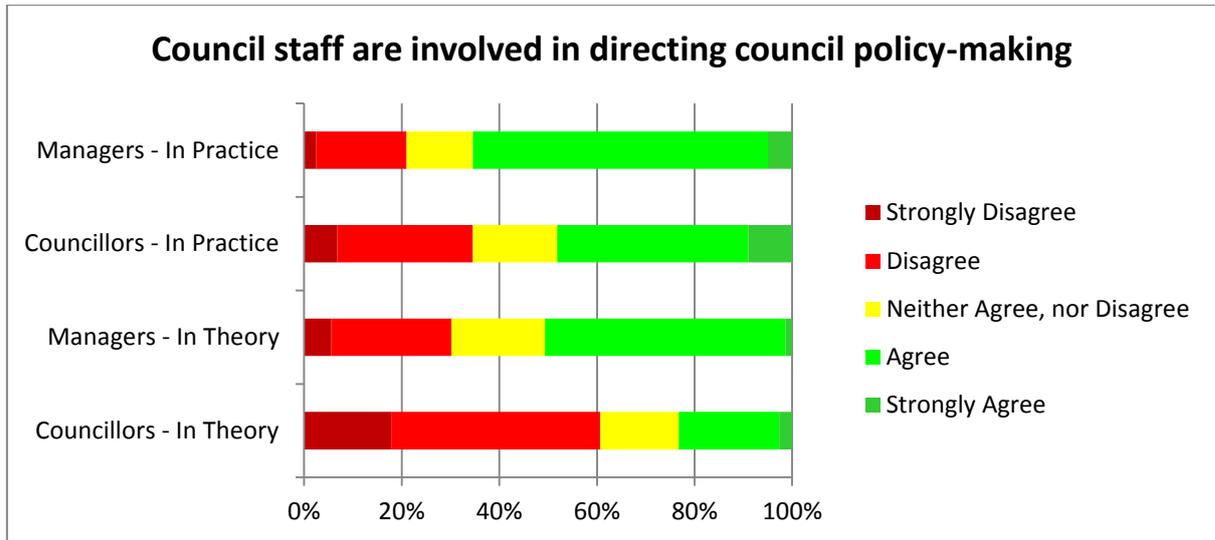


Figure 6.2 - Staff Involvement in Policy Making

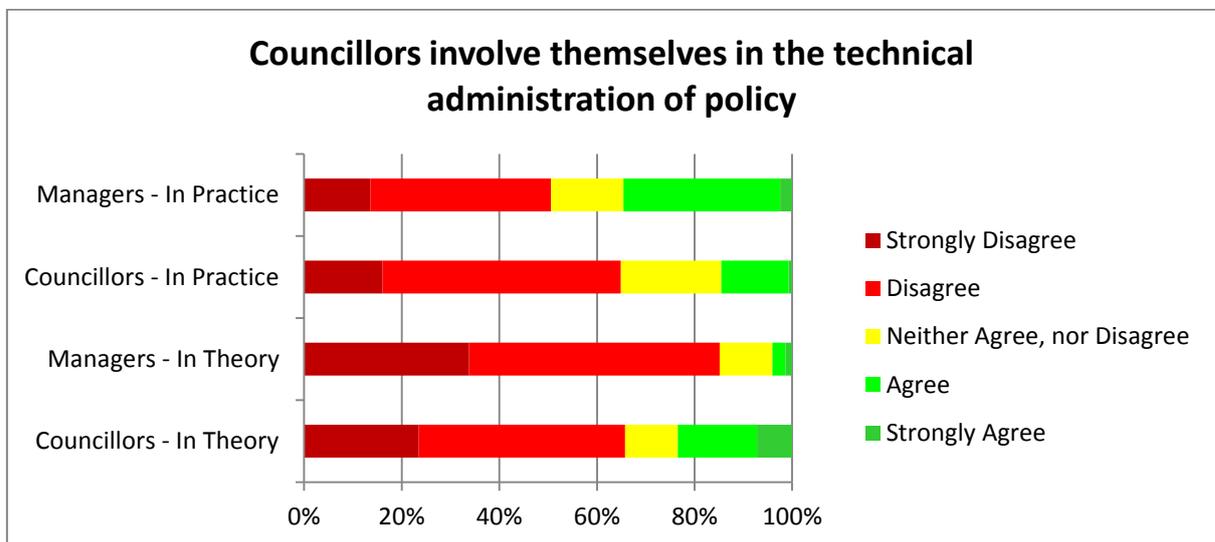


Figure 6.3 - Councillor Involvement in Administrative Issues

The most pronounced disagreement was the ideal role of council staff in council policy-making. While 46% of managers considered that they should be involved in directing policy-making, this only had the agreement of 19% of councillors. The high number of managers with this view, combined with the support of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy, suggests that

managers consider the division as relating to the inputs of each group, which are community desires (for councillors) and technical expertise (for staff). This would be in contrast to a role-based separation between the development and implementation of policy. Figure 6.4 below portrays the two relationship bases.

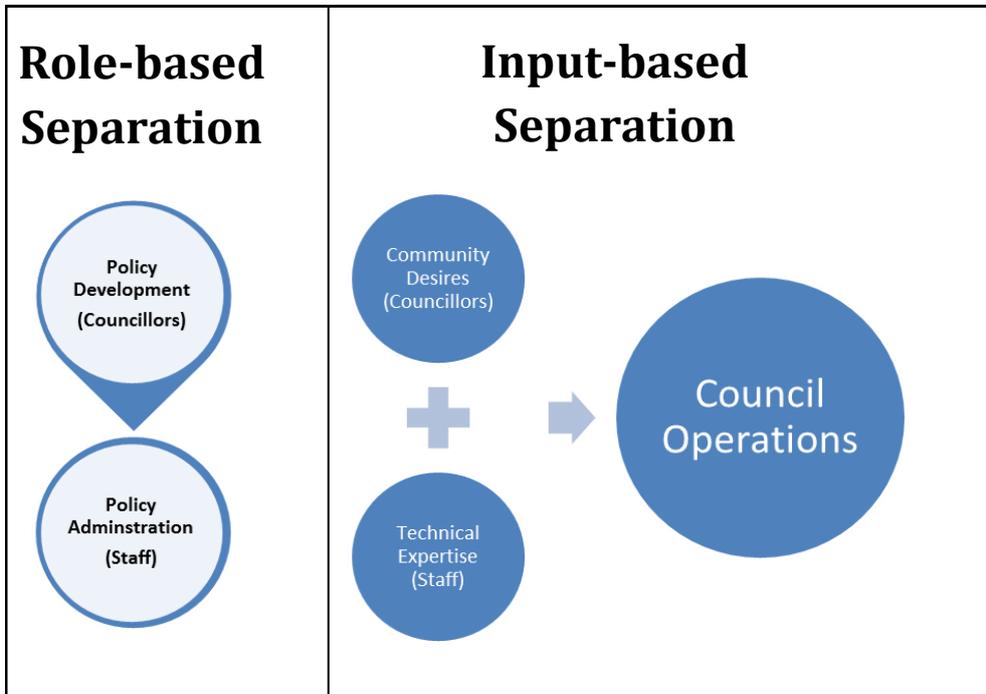


Figure 6.4 - Role and Input Division

Data presented in Figure 6.5 shows that while both policy-making and representative roles are seen as appropriate foci for councillors, policy-making is considered to be underemphasised by councillors. Interestingly, there is a substantial difference in views regarding how much councillors currently hold policy-making as a key role. While 66% of councillors perceive themselves to focus on policy-making, only 35% of managers held the same view. When asked about a possible reason for this result, one manager put forward this suggestion:

Councillors historically just want to make decisions and they're not particularly good at sitting down and working through complicated policy which then constrains their decision-making. In fact I remember one councillor, we were working through a statutory planning document at (another) council... I can still remember him, he leaned across the table, he was so angry at this policy we had developed up, he said 'I don't like this because this is going to constrain my ad-hoc decision-making!' (Key Informant 6)

Further on in this discussion, the respondent offered the view that the desire to be able to make 'ad-hoc decision-making' stems from the elected nature of councillors, which often leads to

short-term actions which are more likely to win votes than long-term policy-making (Key Informant 6). This carries the implication that community representation naturally receives the predominant focus, regardless of the recognised importance of the policy-making role. The current trend of increasing complexity of local government (discussed theoretically in Section 2.5.1) is leading to more pronounced legal requirements and a growing need for proficiency in technical and management skills. This has reduced the ability for councillors to be involved in setting the 'how' of policy, instead having to focus on the 'what'. The statement below, given by a CEO of a large council, presents this view:

Increasingly that part of our business (delivery of water services) is becoming a challenge because things get more complicated technically... I think the trend worldwide now is when these things become more complex technically, is that you get a technical governance arm and then keep a pricing, policy, service-level role for councillors, it just gets split up. You've got to be careful about that sort of thing but I think it can work (Key Informant 1)

This view promotes a middle ground between the role-based and input-based relationships. While both groups dominate a separate realm, the administration holds more autonomy for decisions regarding technical direction and the policy-making role of councillors is limited to setting the broad, overall goals. This approach is dominant in most council relationships with council controlled organisations and contractors. In-house relationships can differ and a positive method is to use an interactive approach to policy development in which each group focuses on their respective inputs within a shared process, while councillors still hold ultimate authority and staff still implement these resolutions.

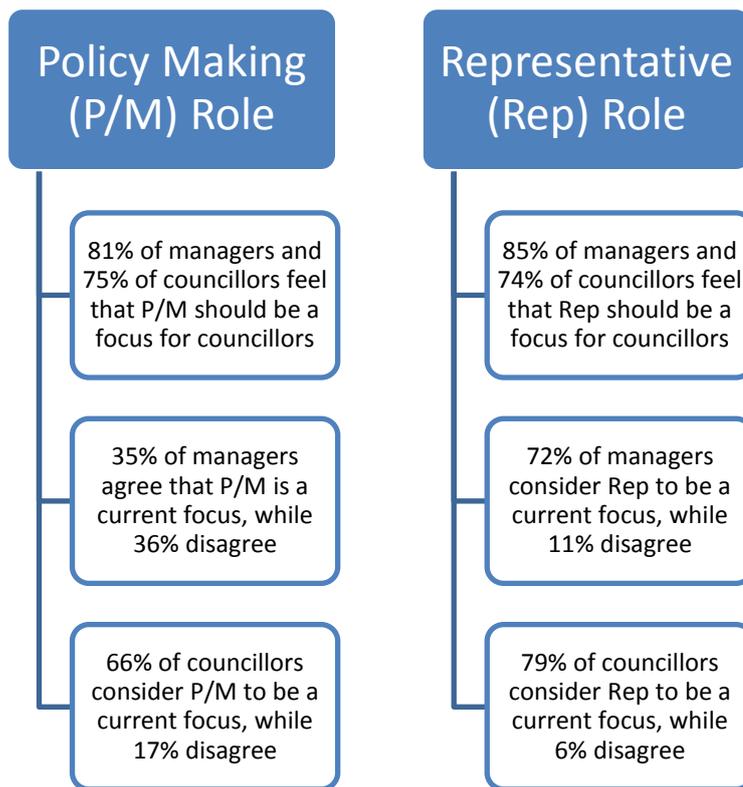


Figure 6.5 - Councillor Roles

The important differentiation between empirical role-based situations and the pure form of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy is the need for staff to make judgments to implement policy. The dichotomy, in its purest sense, relies on the development of completely thorough policy of which the implementation is a relatively mechanical process. However, policy-making inherently involves a technical component in addition to the transformation of community desires. Consequently, the traditional role-based approach is weakened by the failure to formally establish mechanisms for staff to integrate their technical expertise into policy-making. This failure can be seen in theory, in which it contributes to the debate over the Politics/Administration Dichotomy, as well as in practice. The debate surrounding the dichotomy has suffered from misunderstandings over the exact functionality it would involve, which then resulted in the re-interpreted dichotomies which each typology in Chapter 2 discussed under varying guises. While theoreticians have considered the need for more explicit attention towards the inputs of each group within the other's realm, in practice this has been left to councils to make decisions individually and without any guidance. Consequently, the relationship structures vary between councils and there is a lack of evaluation given to the different approaches. In addition, the establishment of relationship approaches and the

integration of inputs are often made informally and subconsciously, rather than as a result of deliberate contemplation of the optimal structure.

While managers subscribe to an input-based separation, an analysis of councillor responses from both the survey and interviews supports the role-based separation. This can be seen in the low proportion who feel staff should be involved in policy-making, as well as statements such as “the council should be developing policy and the staff enacting it” (Key Informant 9). This view, which includes a role for staff in providing advice, links the separation of roles with the hegemonic relationship structure. Figure 6.4 below portrays the two different viewpoints.

Interestingly, the rhetoric adopted in both the survey and interview responses predominantly used the terms ‘governance’ and ‘management’ to refer to the two realms. This discourse is more linked to the policy development/administration separation than the community desires/technical expertise divide. While these two groupings are similar, both community desires and technical expertise need to be integrated into policy development. This is also true, to a lesser degree, for policy implementation, in which some areas require consideration of community desires.

The often unrecognised difference between role-based and input-based divisions may be contributing to the misunderstandings within councils, as well as the ambiguity in current theoretical debates. The adoption of either separation model results in different expectations regarding the actions of each group. Consequently, when a councillor or staff member subscribing to the input-based model tries to integrate those inputs into the ‘realm’ of the other, those subscribing to the role-based model perceive this as an invasion into their role. This perception needs to be overcome in order to achieve an interactive relationship, as these are inherently based on the inputs of each group. This contrasts with the role-based view that each group ‘owns’ one realm, which the other can have a small contribution into. The role, or realm, based approach comes from the theoretical foundations of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy and consequently holds certain strengths, such as well-defined accountability, protection from political interference, and democratic control. However, the weaknesses include a lack of creativity and the potential for power struggles (as proclaimed in Peters’ Adversarial Model). As discussed in the previous chapter, this approach is established as a legislative base.

The input-based separation is an embodiment of the Complementarity Model. Svava argued that the two groups should be involved in the same processes, into which they would incorporate their respective inputs. This occurs within some New Zealand councils, with these institutions endorsing the approach with positive experiences. The environment created is argued to be conducive to creativity, as both groups feel comfortable suggesting unconventional ideas and the different backgrounds complement each other. There is a risk that accountability will be undermined, although councillors in these councils continue to accept ultimate responsibility. The factors which influence the step from a role-based to an input-based division are predominantly based around the personalities involved, as well as the level of trust and openness.

6.2.2 Technical Issues

Councillors and council staff interviewed generally had similar views on the issues of councillors managing technical issues. The essence of this view was put forward by a CEO, who stated that:

(Councillors) are usually smart enough to understand when they're out of their depths anyway, because we do get a bit technical. So in the areas of technology and finance and engineering, things get pretty complicated at times and councillors are not expected to understand, nor do they particularly want to. They usually, usually, not always, keep a pretty clear focus on their governance role, thinking 'how does this contribute towards the outcomes that I seek for our community?' (Key Informant 1)

This view complements the input-based relationship, with councillors reverting to their key purpose. Both small and large councils often use this approach, as the time expectations for councillors at small councils are much lower than would be required to have a thorough involvement in operations, while those at larger councils are often too busy to be involved in all matters (Key Informant 4). Many respondents, both councillors and staff, promoted the skills of councillors in questioning staff on technical issues (Key Informants 8; 10). This skill has the ability to simplify complex issues into layperson terms and then consider how they impact, or are impacted by, community values and desires (Key Informant 10). Key Informant 8, a councillor, stated that:

I think that having normal people exploring these issues (is best). They're not trained in these issues but they're trained to ask questions to try to understand, 'how did that technical person come to that decision; and how did that technical person come to a different decision to that technical person; and what is the difference between the two outcomes which they have come to?' (Key Informant 8)

It was also argued that technical staff should be able to explain and discuss complex issues in a manner which laypeople can understand, while still retaining enough information to be robust (Key Informant 8; 11). However, most areas of council operations have some councillors who are experienced or interested in them and so know enough to initiate basic debates (Key Informants 10; 12). While efficiency can sometimes be compromised when councillors are not familiar with the issues at hand, this is seen as a necessary and acceptable shortcoming within a democratic system (Key Informants 2; 6; 9; 11; 12). Furthermore, the training programme 'Making Good Decisions' was lauded by respondents who had undertaken it as extremely beneficial (Key Informants 8; 10). One councillor discussed the difficulty which they found the course, which was considered to reveal its necessity (Key Informant 8). This necessity is an inevitable result of the increasing technical expectations placed on councillors (Key Informants 3; 10; 11). These views, along with other survey and interview data, confirms the involvement of New Zealand councils in the global trend of increasing complexity of local government, as discussed in Section 2.5.1.

6.2.3 Community Representation

Councillors are community representatives and consequently receive a large degree of lobbying by the public. While council staff are usually exposed to community views (particularly so in small districts), councillors are almost always the first contact if public members want to give feedback or input into council operations (Key Informants 1; 2; 8; 11). While this is an invaluable aspect of the democratic system, the elected nature of councillors also has disadvantages. Numerous survey comments, as well as interview respondents, commented on issues around interest groups 'hijacking' councillors, as well as 'single-issue councillors' who fight for a particular issue and fails to balance views or make defensible decisions (Key Informants 7; 10). While the elected nature of councillors is the embodiment of democratic principles and ensures council operations are driven by public interests, several survey comments criticised the short-sighted decisions and foci that result from politically-driven actions. Furthermore, 60% of survey respondents considered that the elected nature of councillors was not conducive to good policy-making and 49% felt it was not conducive to good administrative oversight. The need for the majority of councillors to agree on decisions before they are implemented moderates the potential inappropriate political actions by individual councillors, while consultation requirements create a supplementary method for integrating community opinions.

As discussed in Section 4.3.3, consultation requirements have significantly increased in New Zealand. Interview respondents were asked about the ramifications of this trend on the roles of councillors and council staff. From this, a general recognition was observed that the technical aspect of statutory consultative requirements increases the role of staff in administering these processes. As stated by one CEO, “the means by which you consult are now dictated by legislation, therefore that’s our gig, we have to... ensure the council complies” (Key Informant 5). However, there was an almost unanimous view that consultation feeds into councillor considerations of the public interests. That is, the process of consultation is led by staff but the outputs are still assessed and used by councillors. Councillors are also commonly involved in the actual processes, as it is seen as part of their mandate as public representatives. An example of this was found in the smallest council examined, where staff had recently organised a large consultation programme, in which they asked councillors to stand outside supermarkets to receive views and ideas from the public regarding the service provision issue being considered (Key Informants 4; 5). The predominant finding in terms of consultation is that its increasing legal technicality has not changed responsibilities regarding the input of community views. Instead, it has only changed the procedures involved and led to staff organising the formal processes. This would be expected in the model of role divisions previously discussed, with the integration of community viewpoints into council policy being the responsibility of councillors in both the role-based and input-based divisions. This has led to both councillors and staff promoting the involvement of councillors within consultation.

6.3 Values

Local governments work towards the interests of their community and should consequently reflect the values of that community. These values are integrated into council operations by both councillors and staff and consequently, many questions in both the survey and interviews looked at how values are negotiated by each group. When asked whether the two groups hold the same values and viewpoints, 60% of respondents disagreed, while only 12% agreed. A hypothesis formulated at the start of research was that councillors focus on the integration of social legitimacy into council operations, while staff focus on producing efficient results. However, survey results (summarised in Figure 6.6 and Figure 6.7) were mixed in evaluating this theory. In terms of council legitimacy, 72% of respondents considered the democratic representation by councillors to be the key source. Despite this, only 27% of respondents felt that councillors are primarily driven by this legitimacy and only 56% felt they were the predominant foundation for incorporating public interests.

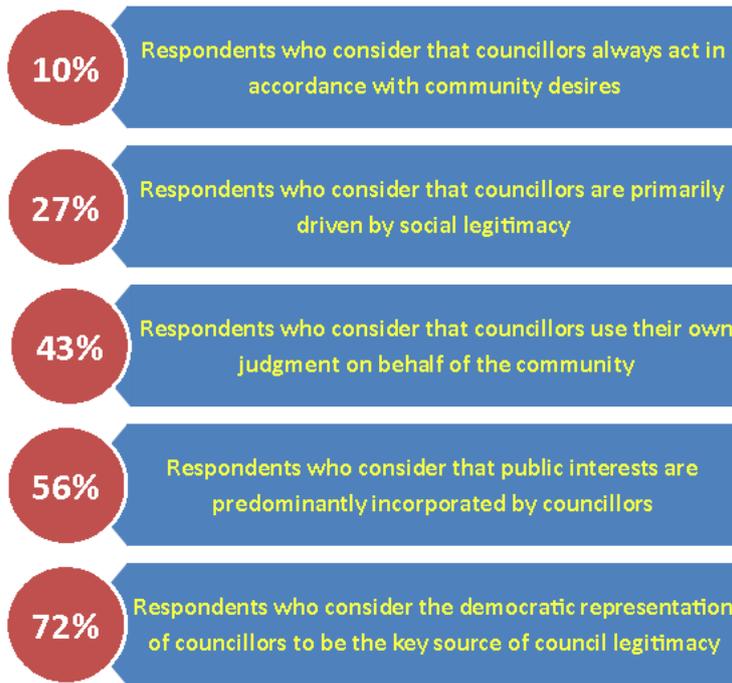


Figure 6.6 - Summary of Data on Councillor Values

This data suggests that the democratic approach taken by councillors is mostly trusteeship, rather than delegation. This was reinforced by direct questions on whether councillors always act in accordance with community desires (10%) or whether they use their own judgment on behalf of their community (43%). These findings match those from international research, which was discussed in Section 2.4.2. Essentially, an analysis of data shows a perception from both councillors and managers that the former are the embodiment of community interests and their ultimate decision-making power is, appropriately, the primary source of council legitimacy. However, the decision-making and policy development activities hold community desires to be one factor of many that councillors consider, others of which include efficiency and quasi-professional views on strategic planning. The expansion of considerations stems from the trustee approach of representation, as the use of judgment by councillors necessarily involves considering other issues than existing community desires. This representation approach can, in some cases, encourage the hegemonic, role-based structure rather an interactive, input-based structure. However, this is not inevitable and the latter relationship model can be combined with the ultimate decision-making authority of councillors in order to maintain the accountability measures and democratic administration of councils. As previous sections have suggested, the variety of perceptions regarding the roles and relations of councils can cause internal friction within councils, while also preventing an explicit and cohesive approach.

Results regarding the values of staff were similar to those for councillors. Specifically, 73% of respondents consider the key source of efficiency to be the technical skills and knowledge of staff. However, this drops to 51% in terms of considering whether efficiency is the primary driver of council staff. This figure is nearly double of that asking whether legitimacy is the main driver of councillors, suggesting that staff hold a more basic role. An explanation of why 22% disagreed with the assertion that efficiency is the primary driver of staff can be seen in another result; 60% of respondents felt that staff also consider social justice concerns in their administration of policy. This was reinforced by numerous interviewees, some of whom felt that social justice concerns were an appropriate consideration for staff, while others felt it was inevitable and tolerable (Key Informants 2; 9; 12; 13). An assembly of these findings (presented in Figure 6.7 below) suggests that efficiency is certainly a significant factor for council staff, although it is not the only one. Interestingly, the view was put forward by several managers that councillors actually care more for efficiency than staff, who often champion the need to consider social and environmental issues (Key Informant 1; 4). In parallel with this, the strong concern held by communities in regards to rates increases results in councillors holding economic efficiency as a top priority (Key Informants 2; 3; 5; 11; 13). Acceptable

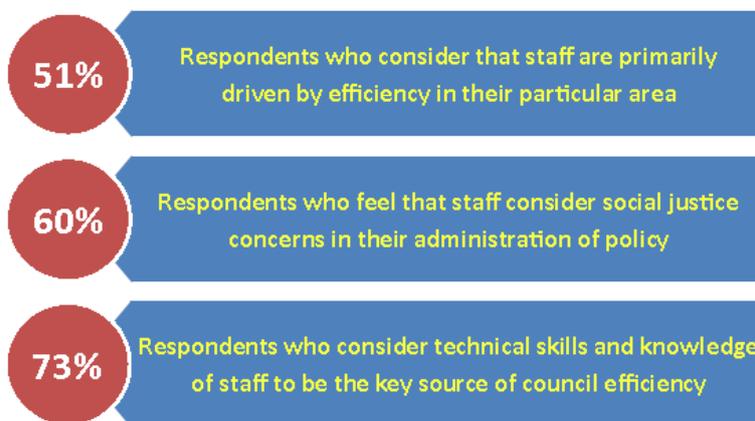


Figure 6.7 - Summary of Data on Staff Values

In terms of the overall balance between efficiency and legitimacy, most respondents interviewed gave the view that the current structure works relatively well, but often followed this with a disclaimer about the limited alternatives (Key Informants 2; 3; 4; 6; 8). For instance, one councillor replied “I think it’s imperfect, but it probably is reasonably well balanced. It’s probably as close as you can get to an effective way of translating what the community wants into the actual services that we provide” (Key Informant 8). As Figure 6.8 below shows, there is an ambiguous mixture of views on the foci of councils. While managers hold a relatively collective view that efficiency should be a primary focus more than it currently is (as well as

compared to general legitimacy), the two groups hold no particular commitment to either efficiency or legitimacy. This is potentially a result of the interconnections between the two values.

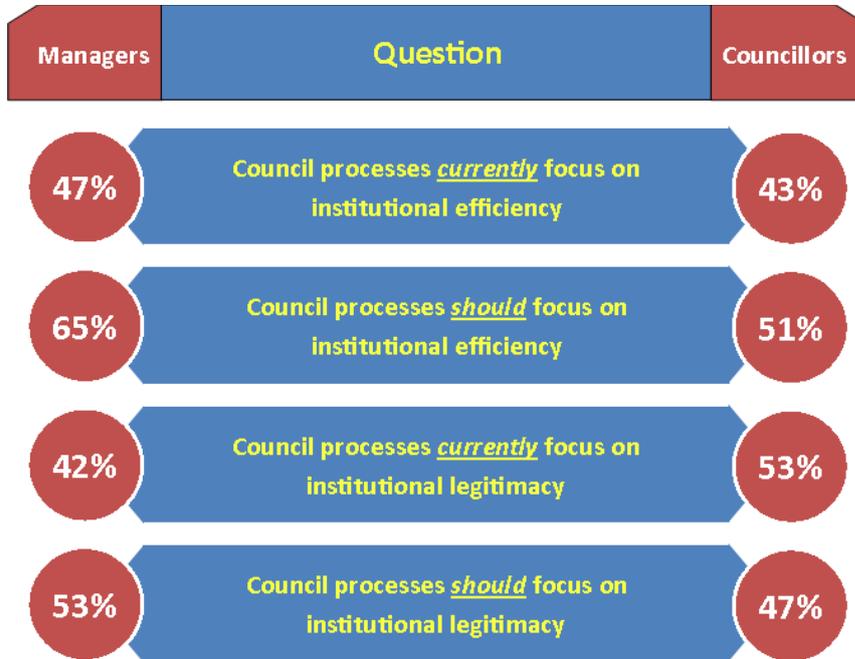


Figure 6.8 - Views on Efficiency and Legitimacy

Interview data discussing the mixed values each group considers, along with survey data, supports the postmodernist academic work on public servants discussed in Section 2.4.3. Specifically, the view that personal beliefs and external values play a key role in staff operations was validated within the New Zealand setting. This point was raised by one manager, who pointed out that:

I guess you'd probably like to think that (staff) are bringing in more professional, or a less value-driven approach, than the councillors will and probably most times that's probably true. But there's always going to be values sitting in the policy advisors' minds as well, sometimes perhaps not as clearly understood. (Key Informant 3)

While the inevitability of values being integrated into the mind-set of staff is being increasingly recognised (both theoretically and empirically), the New Public Management movement is moving staff back towards a single-focused approach. For example, one councillor stated that “there is a big element of (efficiency) in staff, because that’s where their performance is appraised. They’re not appraised on how well they took in the views of the community, they’re appraised on how well they do the job within budget” (Key Informant 8).

Results relating to the values each group incorporate can be related back to Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's (1981) Facts/Interests Model. This suggests that staff focus on technical expertise, while elected officials integrate values and interests on behalf of the community. The model, which resembles the input-based relationship approach previously discussed, received mixed signals in the survey results. While there is a widespread appreciation that each group are key sources of legitimacy and efficiency, respectively, their actions encompass various different aspects in addition to these foundations. This is likely a result of two issues. Firstly, the input-based (matching the Facts/Interest Model) and role-based structures have been considered in this research as ideals, while empirical cases inevitably lie between the two extremes. Secondly, the quantitative analysis of survey results is unfavourable for explaining situations with multiple approaches within them. Specifically, the presence of input-based relationships in some councils and role-based relationships in others would be prone to getting masked by a simple quantitative analysis of all responses. However, an analysis of interview data shows that different councils are orientated towards each structure in different ways. For example, one council had a strict demarcation of roles in which the participation of the other group was limited. Conversely, two councils examined (of different sizes) focused on incorporating the inputs of each group into shared processes, demonstrating that Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's facts/interest divide is relevant to the New Zealand setting.

A second of Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman's models that is appropriate to utilise within the New Zealand setting is the energy/equilibrium divide. On one side of this equation, 44% of councillors agreed with the idea that they are the predominant means of energy and leadership within councils, while 60% felt they should be (as shown in Figure 6.9). However, council managers were more indifferent, with only 16% agreeing in current situation. Interview discussions and survey comments point to a possible cause for this, which was put clearly in the survey by one manager who stated:

Many high performance Councils have highly engaged workforces and energetic leadership [within management] which has been developed regardless of who sits at the Council table. This arises because in any modern well-functioning Council, the elected members are not involved in recruitment (other than of the CEO) so are largely removed from the vision, values and resultant culture that emerges at organisational level.

On the other side of the energy/equilibrium divide, there was a dominant validation for the role of staff in contributing long-term stability and consistency into council operations. In combination with the above discussion on the values which drive each group, these results reveal a larger degree of certainty or simplicity in the roles/inputs of staff than for councillors.

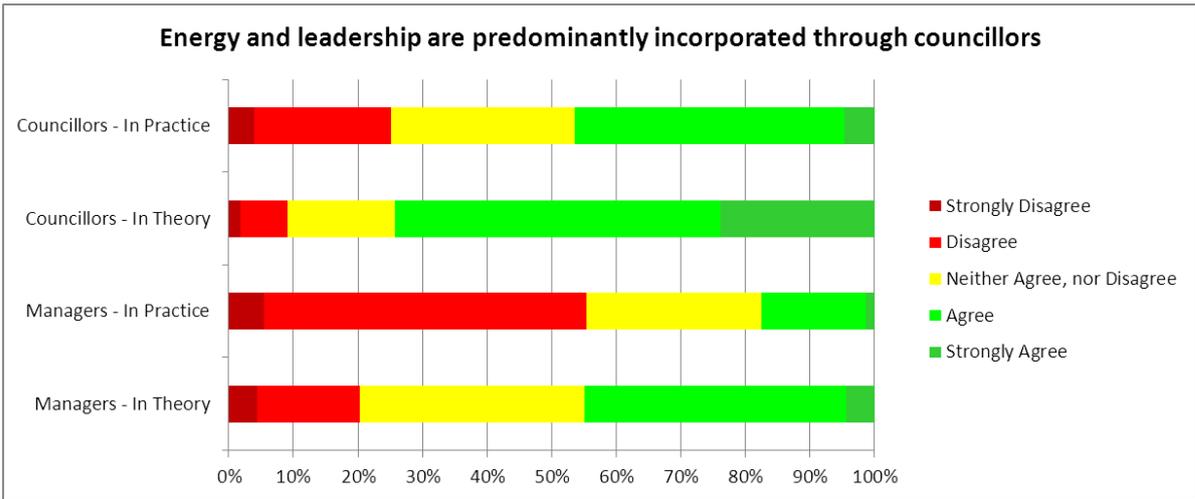


Figure 6.9 - Councillor Contribution to Energy and Leadership

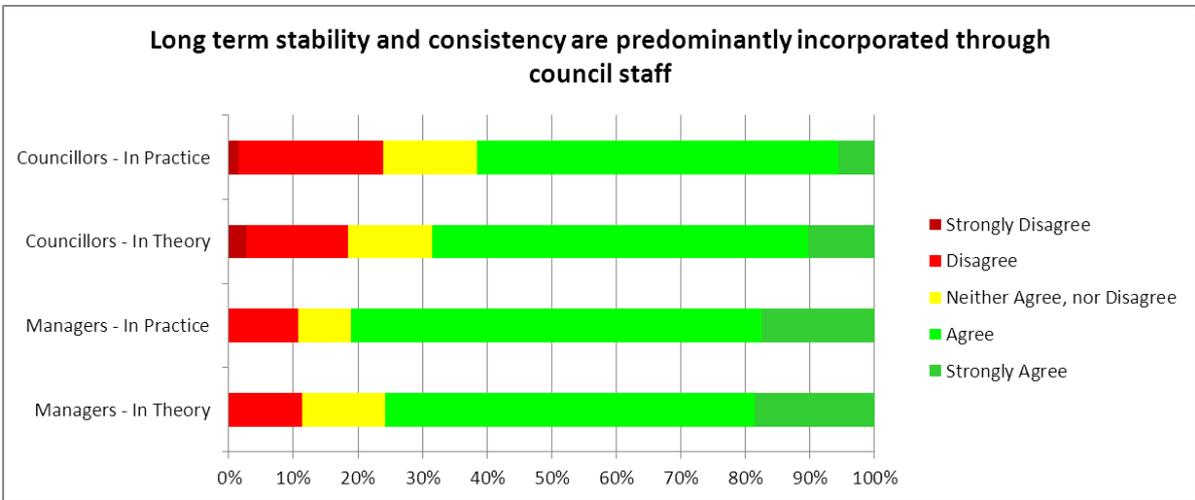


Figure 6.10 - Staff Contribution to Stability and Consistency

6.4 Power Relations

While the majority of interview respondents were content with the power relations between councillors and staff, survey data revealed that there are cases where authority and influence are contested between the two groups. This includes contrasting views over the role of managers in policy-making, the current influence held by each group, and the accountability of managers.

Following an explicit approach, three survey questions enquired directly about perceptions on how the current structure establishes dominance. As shown in Figure 6.11, these revealed

perceptions from both groups that council staff are the driving force within councils. This results from both their technical staff and knowledge (which received particular support from managerial respondents) and their administrative role. While managers feel this is appropriate, councillors generally disagreed with that view and desired more influence for themselves.

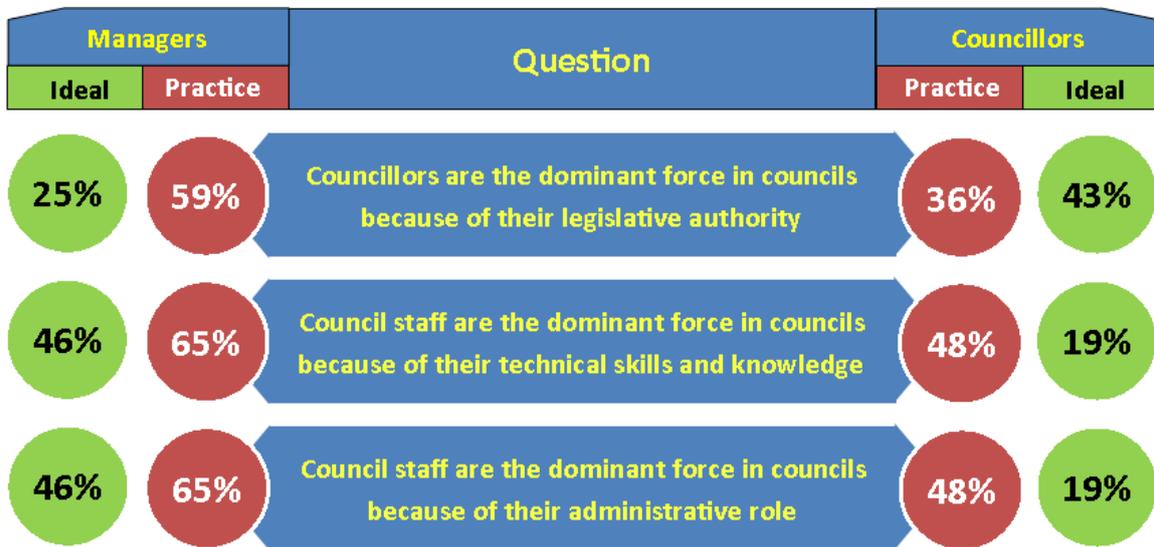


Figure 6.11 - Perceptions on Influence (both in current practice and ideologically)

Reasons for these quantitative findings were provided by survey comments, particularly by the multitude of councillors objecting to the dominance of staff. One respondent commented that: “there are very entrenched senior managers in our council who have way too much power. Councillors are not respected and often left out of important information sharing. There is an attitude of staff knows best rather than mutually working together for the good of all”.

Views on the whether staff are subject to councillor desires and managerial involvement in policy-making reinforce the difference in opinions on appropriate levels of influence. Figure 6.12, below, shows the varying opinions on these topics, with staff perceiving themselves to be more independent and involved in directing policy. There are also relatively pronounced differences between ideological desires and the current situation, both for staff and councillor respondents. One comment on the survey stated: “quite often everyone wants to be in charge whether it be Councillors, Mayors, CEO's, staff and even Directors of council controlled organisations”.

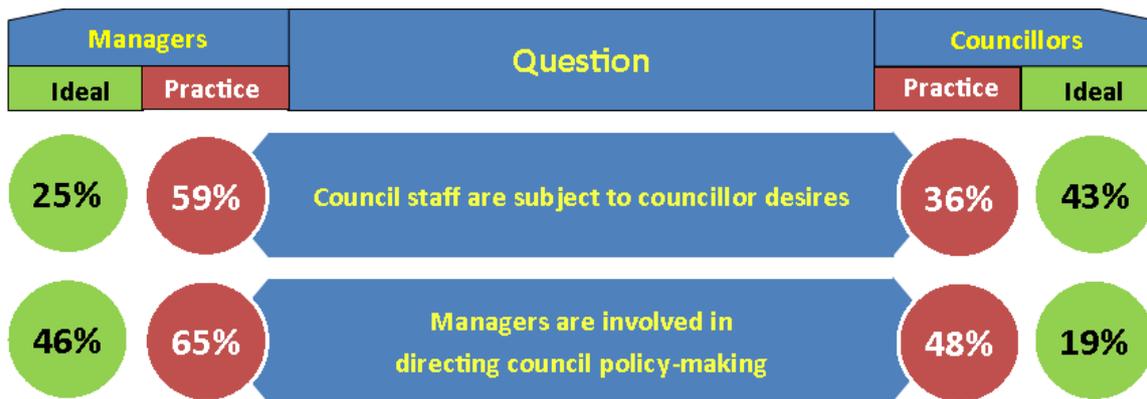


Figure 6.12 - Views Regarding Staff Roles (both in practice and ideologically)

The power held by CEOs was often pointed to by respondents as contributing to imbalances within councils. Discussing a previous CEO, one mayor comments: “you get a strong chief executive and they can drive things that there wouldn't necessarily be council support for and they can do that in a number of ways, they can be the gatekeeper of information coming in” (Key Informant 9). Survey comments also considered the link between ‘power-hungry’ CEOs and a lack of leadership from councillors and the mayor. This is a common issue with the council-manager form and corresponds with international experiences (Mouritzen & Svara, 2002). The potential influence of CEOs also links with the creation of cliques within council. As mentioned in Section 5.2, many councils feature a dominant group of councillors and managers. The intermediary role of CEOs increases the ability for staff to provide more information to some councillors than to others. Numerous councillors complained of this situation in their council, with one stating:

Unfortunately the present system where council employs only one employee who then employees the remainder of the staff places the balance of power in the hands of council officers. This means that council staff can bring elected members into line very easily by favouring compliant councillors over those who toe the line. This has occurred to the extent in my district that council officers no longer respond to the e-mails I send seeking information or addressing the issues that people raise with me.

While the use of informal, e-mail-based communication between councillors and staff is pragmatic (and perhaps necessary), it also has the potential to exacerbate issues around councillors receiving differing amounts of information. This can be mitigated by having formal structures in place for interaction and sharing of information between groups, with full participation from councillors.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined various aspects of internal council relations. Perceptions on the roles of each group were investigated and it was found that councillors and managers often have slightly different ideas on the appropriate responsibilities of each group. Councillors tend to view their relationship with staff as being based on a separation of roles, with policy-making being their 'realm' and the implementation of this policy being the role of staff. This often leads to hegemonic and disjointed processes, with the outputs of staff operations being presented to councillors to aid their policy-making. However, a second view was presented by some respondents that focused on inputs rather than roles. In this approach, councillors are concerned with incorporating public interests and values into council processes, while staff provide technical expertise. The historic lack of distinction between these two attitudes arises from the large degree of connections. Policy-making is largely seen as the process whereby community desires are translated into broad plans for action and procedural guidelines. However, policy-making often involves technical decisions as well. Similarly, the implementation of policy is often an inherently political task and involves decisions which require balancing social desires and values. It is likely that these distinctions between the two types of separations contribute to the objections raised in the survey regarding perceived intruding into each group's realm.

An inability for councillors to appropriately negotiate technical issues was raised by a small number of managers as being detrimental to council efficiency. However, research findings showed a largely common view that technical issues can be addressed by councillors setting the broad goals and operating style, while leaving other issues to the relevant staff. From this, it can be judged that a hegemonic relationship, both input-based and role-based, can be appropriate for some issues. These typically include apolitical services which are predominantly judged the quality of outputs.

Increasing statutory requirements for undertaking public consultation were also discussed in relation to possible impacts on the roles of councillors and staff. While these requirements are increasing the role of staff in coordinating consultative processes, it was found that there was no significant impact on the representative role of councillors. Key informants pointed out that the outputs of consultation were fed into the decision-making processes of councillors, rather than staff, and complements the elected legitimacy of councillors. This chapter also discussed the values that councillors and staff integrate into council processes. Survey responses revealed

the view that council legitimacy primarily stems from councillors and efficiency is principally a product of council staff. However, the actions of each group are influenced by a far wider range of values. The levels of influence and independence held by each group were subject to relatively pronounced differences in perceptions. It was found that staff and councillors both felt the other held too much influence, although the causes of this were not explored.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Summary

Local government encompasses a large degree of diversity and there are consequently a wide range of perceptions and attitudes regarding ostensibly simple topics. This research has examined some of these topics, with a focus on the relationships between elected officials and bureaucrats. The focus draws on pre-existing relationship models, as well as theoretical work on structure, roles, values, and current trends within local government. This background contributed to the development of research objectives, which directed the report towards the structure of interactions in the New Zealand setting. The methodological approach to collect and analyse data in this area included a broad survey and interviews with councillors and managers from a range of case study authorities.

An analysis of research findings reveals that some councils subscribe to the Politics/Administration Dichotomy, while others can be seen to embody the Complementarity Model. As well as representing differences between councils, this split can also be seen within individual councils. Responsibilities surrounding technical issues are increasingly being separated into designating desired outcomes and the delivery of these. This differs from other issues which hold a greater degree of political concerns, as the operational processes are tied together with consideration of community desires and values. The former category of services tends to use a Politics/Administration Dichotomy and often feature a hegemonic relationship between policy makers and implementers. This allows for councils to either benefit from market competition by contracting out services, or establish council controlled organisations to use New Public Management principles for efficiency gains. However, local government responsibilities which are controversial and require legitimate processes in addition to outcomes are not suited to the hegemonic, divided relationship structure. Instead, these services benefit from including councillors and staff in shared, interactive processes in which each group integrates their appropriate inputs. New Zealand legislation establishes a formal, hegemonic structure which fails to establish or promote interactive procedures. This forces individual councils to develop processes for councillor-staff interactions, which tend to be informal and can result in uneven information sharing and the exclusion of some councillors.

7.2 Comments on Theory

Reflecting on the relationship models discussed in Chapter 2, almost all were useful in aspects of New Zealand local government. However, none were sufficient in explaining all aspects of local government relationships. The trend toward increased responsibilities and complexity in local government, as well as the movement towards New Public Management were both seen to have an ongoing influence on the roles and relationship structures being used. Both trends resulted in a move away from interactive processes and created structures in which policy makers and implementers largely confined their inputs into their respective 'realms'. Research findings also highlighted a key issue in the ongoing debate surrounding the pertinence of the Politics/Administration Dichotomy. While this dichotomy stipulates a disconnection between the development and implementation of policy, an agreed definition of policy-making seems to be largely absent. Consequently, the debate around the role of council staff in the development of policy cannot be productive until there is an agreement on the scope of policy.

The appropriate scope for policy-making differs between issues, with some requiring technical decisions to be integrated while others can be limited to the goals surrounding the quality of outputs. The theoretical background does reveal a consciousness that the implementation of policy can be political in nature, particularly when social values and desires need to be balanced. This needs to be expanded on in order to understand how interactive relationship processes can integrate the inputs of each group into all council operations in a cooperative manner. The optimal integration of inputs by each group is an underlying motive for Svava's Complementarity Model, but the model's theoretical significance needs to be translated into practical guidance for the local government sector. In addition, the theoretical background did not reveal any distinction being considered between local government services. The weakness of this was made apparent in the research collection process, as many respondents drew attention to the need for different approaches which take into account the important characteristics of the particular services. This need to take the particular service into consideration has a key impact on local government relationship theory. Specifically, the relatively recent introduction of the Complementarity Model is very valuable, but does not replace the established Politics/Administration Dichotomy. Instead, they are both useful in explaining different situations and this needs to be appreciated when discussing the appropriate direction for local government relations.

7.3 Future Research

The thesis has been successful in meeting the research aim of analysing relationship dynamics in New Zealand territorial authorities. The key structures in which elected officials and council managers interact have been explained and analysed, along with the motives and impacts associated with these structures. However, the relatively small base of academic literature regarding New Zealand council relationships has meant the current study has been relatively introductory in nature. A key goal of this research has consequently been to promote consideration of these issues. An evaluation of whether this goal has been achieved is not possible at this time, although it is hoped that the dissemination of this thesis will encourage a degree of awareness in both practice and academia.

The research has revealed several aspects of both theory and practice which are underdeveloped. A particular lesson that can be taken from this research is that the development of guidelines on interactive relationship processes would improve the relationship processes in New Zealand local government. These guidelines would identify a range of best-practice processes, as well as when it would be appropriate for their use. Additionally, guidelines could encourage conscious and transparent deliberations on how potential structures promote certain organisational and social values at the expense of others.

The embryonic nature of the study area means that there are many areas for possible future research. One area which could yield useful results would be to examine Statements of Intent for council controlled organisations and formal contracts for outsourced services, as these openly state operational values and expectation. In particular, research could analyse whether councils are integrating aspects of the social good into council controlled organisations and contractor processes through these methods of control. Another key research area would be a comparison of interactive processes currently employed in councils. This would contribute to formal knowledge on best-practice methods and allow for councils considering new processes to learn from the experience of other councils rather than learning from experimentation.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Council Survey

Thank for you taking part in this survey. Responses to the survey will be completely anonymous and invaluable to my research.

There are five sections, with the 'next' button located in the bottom-left of the page. The survey is expected to take approximately 5-10 minutes.

Feel free to e-mail nathan.stocker@otago.ac.nz if you are interested in a copy of the final report.

Once again, your participation is very much appreciated.

Regards,

Nate Stocker

University of Otago MPlan Student

Which of the following describes your position at Council?

- Mayor
- Councillor
- Senior Manager/Director
- Other (Please Specify) _____

	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Councillors direct council policy-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff direct council policy-making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors involve themselves in the technical administration of policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff consider social justice concerns in their administration of policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The key source of council legitimacy is the democratic representation by councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors are primarily driven by a desire for social legitimacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The technical skills and knowledge of council staff are the key source of council efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff are primarily driven by a desire for efficiency in their particular fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Councillors are the dominant force of council operations as a result of their legislative authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff are the dominant force of council operations as a result of their technical skills and knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff are the dominant force of council operations as a result of their administrative ability to direct and control council processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council staff are subject to councillor desires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors are dependent on council staff for knowledge and advice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors and council staff vie for authority and influence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

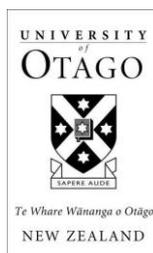
	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Public interests are predominantly incorporated through councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy and leadership are predominantly incorporated through councillors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long term stability and consistency are predominantly incorporated through council staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council operations can be seen as a dichotomy, with councillors as policy makers and council staff as policy implementers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors and council staff have the same values and viewpoints	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socialisation (both personal and professional) and the recruitment process cause an amalgamation of values and decision-making behaviours held by councillors and council staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Councillors focus on a policy-making role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors focus on a representative role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors focus on an administrative oversight role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The roles of councillors are vague	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors always act in accordance with community desires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors always follow their own judgment when considering the best way to act on behalf of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The awareness of elections every three years is conducive to good policy-making by elected officials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The awareness of elections every three years is conducive to good administrative oversight by elected officials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	To what extent do you agree that the following statements are true in regards to your local authority?					To what extent do you agree that the following statements SHOULD be true in regards to local authorities?				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree, nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is a mutual respect between councillors and council staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A mutual respect between councillors and council staff results in self-moderation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is an overlap between the functions of councillors and council staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decision-making processes incorporate the benefits of both councillors and council staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Councillors often go against staff recommendations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, council processes focus on institutional efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, council processes focus on institutional legitimacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you have any other comments on the incorporation of efficiency and legitimacy in local governments, or the nature of the relations between councillors and staff, please feel free to add them below:

Appendix B: Information Sheet



Efficiency and Legitimacy in New Zealand Local Government Information Sheet for Interview Participants

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the aim of the project?

The overarching aim of this research is to evaluate how the relationship between councillors and council staff affects the integration of efficiency and legitimacy in the decision-making processes of New Zealand territorial authorities.

The key components being examined under this aim include the statutory decision-making framework, the respective levels of influence held by councillors and council staff, the roles and relations between councillors and council staff, and the degree to which current local government trends impact on legitimacy and efficiency.

The research is being undertaken as part of the requirements for the Master of Planning (MPlan) programme at the University of Otago.

What types of participants are being sought?

Councillors and council managers are being sought to participate in this study. The methods used to obtain information about potential participants have been focused on council websites and enquiries to council helpdesks. The results of the research, in the final form, will be made available to all participants, by request to the e-mail address given at the bottom of this sheet.

What will participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to partake in an interview of a duration and style which is dependent on the desires of the participants. Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What data or information will be collected and what use will be made of it?

Participants may be asked about their position on the interview being recorded by audio. Any preferences against being recorded will be understood completely and with full acceptance.

Interview tapes will be transcribed, with raw tapes, physical notes, and electronic documents stored securely and accessible only to those named at the bottom of this document. Data regarding personal information, such as names and employment positions, will also be subject to this security. Any transcribed documents of individual interviews will be available upon request to the participant involved in the interview. Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw any statements prior to the publication of the report. At the end of the project, all personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

The data collected will be used for statistical and qualitative analysis and results may be included in the final report. The completed report will be available to all participants after it has been finalised and submitted for marking to the University of Otago. Research articles based on the data and information obtained in this research project may be written by the same researchers. Any such articles will be subject to the same privacy and security stipulations that are included in this information sheet and the accompanying consent form.

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand).

Will my identity be kept anonymous?

Every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. Your name will not be used at any stage in the report and the source of responses will not be identified to persons other than the researchers named below. Utmost efforts will be made to avoid including any details in the report which may allow readers to determine your identity.

Can participants withdraw from the project or decline to answer particular questions?

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes views on the nature of roles, role perceptions, and relationships between councillors and council management, as well as views on legitimacy and efficiency within territorial authorities. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops;

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if participants have any questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Nathan Stocker
Department of Geography
(027) 3586 311
nathan.stocker@otago.ac.nz

and/or

Michelle Thompson-Fawcett
Department of Geography
(03) 479 8762
mtf@geography.otago.ac.nz

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Geography, University of Otago

Appendix C: Consent Form

Efficiency and Legitimacy in New Zealand Local Government

Interview Participant Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identifying information, including any audio recordings, will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes views on the nature of roles, role perceptions, and relationships between councillors and council management, as well as views on legitimacy and efficiency within territorial authorities. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops;
5. If I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any question(s) and may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind;
6. My responses will be kept completely anonymous and utmost efforts will be made to avoid including any details in the report which would allow readers to determine my identity.
7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand)
8. I grant / do not grant permission to allow the research audio record my interview

I agree to take part in this project.

.....
(Signature of participant)



.....
(Date)

.....
(Signature of researcher)

.....
(Date)